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MIS- SIONERS OF NEW GUINEA

ALEXANDER SMALL





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CHALMERS OF NEW GUINEA

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CHALMERS

OF

NEW GUINEA

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NOTE

JAMES CHALMERS was one of the few men who answer to the popular conception of an ideal master missionary. He was a pioneer, and his adventurous days were filled with movement, toil, and hairbreadth escapes ; but he was also a builder up of civilised settlements, and was even content with the humdrum work of teaching children the A B C. He loved both his roving life and his steady labour, and was unhappy away from it. As a result of his efforts a marvellous transformation was wrought in the character of the savage people amongst whom he lived. In the end his service for them was rounded off by a martyr's death. The story of such a career can never fail to be a source of interest and inspiration to old and young.

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CHAPTER I

BOYHOOD AND YOUTH

‘To hardy independence bravely bred,
By early poverty to hardship steeled.’

SCOTSMEN are born wanderers. No man is more passionately devoted to his own country than a Scot, yet none is more adventurous in leaving his native shores and roaming through the world. And is it not marvellous how often it has fallen to the lot of Scotsmen to be the pioneers of Christianity and Civilisation, to inaugurate or carry on great enterprises, or to take a prominent part in the development or the government of foreign lands and of colonies and dependencies of the Empire? Are not the greatest names among our Missionary heroes — Mungo Park and Dr. Livingstone, John G. Paton and James Chalmers, Dr. Laws and

Dr. Donald Fraser—the names of Scotsmen ?

‘ What a splendid figure of a man ! ’ we say when we look at Chalmers’s photograph. A head that may well be classed as ‘ leonine,’ with its great shock of dark hair, beard, and moustache, a frame that is strongly-knit and athletic, a firm, kindly, humorous Scottish face with keen dark eyes ; here, all agree, is a typical ‘ Great-heart.’ Yet, strange to say, we read that in his youth he was thin and considered physically weak. All his life, however, he was accustomed to ‘ roughing it,’ and so sturdy did he become that few men could equal him in physical endurance.

When we read of his character we find it to be in keeping with what we should have expected. Unconventional, impulsive, energetic, fearless, strong-willed yet genial and generous, and passionately in earnest, he was a man divinely fitted for the great work he did in the service of his Master.

The father of James Chalmers was a

working man, a stone-mason who belonged to Peterhead, but migrated to Inveraray to help to build the new quay that was being erected there. Like Hugh Miller and other masons of his day he had to do a good deal of tramping in search of employment ; and it was when he was living at Ardrishaig, a fishing village on Loch Fyne, twenty-three miles south of Inveraray, that his famous son was born, on 4th August 1841.

Everybody nowadays agrees that there is much in heredity, and it is interesting to note that James Chalmers inherited from his parents two distinct strains of character. Both parents were Scottish, but while his father was a reserved, silent, hard-headed Aberdonian, his mother was a Celt, a native of that romantically beautiful village of Luss that nestles by Loch Lomondside. Both were people of simple, thrifty, industrious habits and of God-fearing character. The photograph of his mother depicts a tall, serious, almost severe-looking

figure draped in a voluminous black skirt, and wearing an old-fashioned bonnet with strings beneath her firm chin.

When James was first sent to the village school his Spartan mother gave strict injunctions to the schoolmaster not to spare the rod. The master seems to have acted on her advice. James was in frequent scrapes, but the only punishment that rankled in his mind in after years was one that was inflicted on him unjustly, the real culprit getting scot-free. He was naturally very fond of sweets ; a bigger boy offered him some on condition that he would first chew something else which he would put in his mouth, and which turned out to be tobacco, and made the little urchin hopelessly sick ; and the punishment fell on the victim and not on the tempter.

James's father was seldom at home, his occupation taking him to various places on Loch Fyneside. One week-end when he was at home he gave James a sixpence for being able to repeat the twenty-third Psalm.

The proud boy handed the sixpence to his mother as it was too big a coin for him to deal with, and she confiscated it, and handed him a penny to spend. Thus early did life's youthful illusions begin to fade.

Chalmers tells us in his Autobiography that the people of Ardrishaig were very superstitious. The treatment approved of for whooping-cough was to pass the sick child under and over a donkey's body ! To hear a dog wailing was a sure sign of death.

Living so close to the sea the boy became passionately fond of it. It was supreme happiness to float on a log or a plank or to paddle a raft. In doing this he was continually getting into trouble, and he received many thrashings in consequence. These had little effect. Three times he was carried home insensible and supposed to be drowned ; and his father caustically remarked that he seemed to be born for a different kind of fate. The remark proved prophetic indeed, but in a very different

sense from anything that he imagined. The boy dearly loved adventure ; in his own words ' danger was exhilarating to him.'

When James was about eight years old his parents removed temporarily to High Ballantyre, three miles from Glenaray, and he and his two sisters and various youthful chums walked daily to Glenaray village school and had many ' ploys ' by the way. When they met boys from the rival village of Sallachary there was sure to be a ' row ' with them, which began with throwing turf and developed into throwing stones, and when the master saw the results in black eyes or cut heads, he punished severely and not always justly. The master, Mr. MacArthur, was an admirable teacher, however, and the boys were proud of him and of his reputation for turning out clever scholars. Chalmers's school studies did not progress very far, but they included elementary Latin and Euclid.

James was a great favourite with the Loch Fyne fishermen, and he spent much

of his time in their company, and cherished the ambition of having a boat of his own. He even thought of making one in the orthodox fashion, but as the process was likely to take too much time and trouble he contented himself with improvising one out of a handy herring-box. On his first venture in this new craft he was speedily carried out to sea by the strong current, and was only rescued with difficulty.

One day when the Aray River was in spate after heavy rain, a schoolboy fell in and was being rapidly carried down the stream. When Chalmers heard him cry, he doffed his jacket and plunged into the torrent, caught the boy and, laying hold of the branch of a tree, held him in safety till both were helped to land again. He had acted simply on the impulse of the moment without thought of possible danger to himself ; but the boy of ten was hailed as a hero by his fellow scholars much to his own surprise and delight. A few years after, when he had become a practised

swimmer, he made another successful rescue of a child who had fallen off the quay into the Loch.

When the boy was thirteen he left the Glen School and for a year attended the Grammar School for further instruction. His father was a regular attender at the services of the good parish minister, Dr. Smith, but the boy having been taken to hear the young preacher who had just come to the United Presbyterian Church of Inveraray, the Rev. Gilbert Meikle, took to him greatly, joined his Sunday School when he was eleven, and continued regularly to attend for some years.

But the time had now come when the lad, who was over fourteen, had to decide what he was to be. As yet he had no ideas of his own. His father was anxious that he should become a civil engineer, but want of money rendered that impossible. The boy actually did a little surveying and a little herding, but an opening occurring in the office of the Procurator Fiscal's firm, he was

sent there to sit at a desk and learn to be a lawyer. The Fiscal was a Mr. MacIullich, and his partner was a Mr. Macniven. For three years young Chalmers remained in this office, and then removed to that of Messrs. Wilson and Douglas, another legal firm in Inveraray.

Chalmers himself tells us candidly that this was a time of 'sowing wild oats,' and that he was generally blamed when anything went wrong, whether he was really guilty or not. He was still attending the Sunday School, but not very regularly, and though he loved Mr. Meikle, he was ashamed to face him, and would go out of his way rather than meet him on the road.

But the moment of his decision was coming which was vitally to affect the whole of his future. So far he had simply been drifting, as many a lad drifts, and but for this one incident, which gave a new direction to his thoughts and activities, all the voyage of his life might have been bound in shallows and in miseries. As it

was, this event was to change his character and to be the beginning of a noble career which was to lead to world-wide fame, and to a martyr's crown.

He tells us that he had that Sunday attended the school in the church vestry as usual ; he was fifteen years of age at this time ; the lesson was finished and the pupils had marched back to the church to hear a short address. At the close Mr. Meikle took from his pocket a copy of the *United Presbyterian Record* and read an interesting letter from a missionary in Fiji, which told thrilling things of cannibalism and of the regenerating power of the Gospel. Chalmers listened enthralled.

‘ I wonder,’ said the minister, looking over his spectacles when he had finished reading the letter, ‘ if there is any boy here this afternoon who will yet become a missionary and by-and-by bring the Gospel to the cannibals ? ’ And Chalmers in his heart responded ‘ Yes ; God helping me ; I will.’ He kept his vow unspoken and

went home alone. When he got to the bridge that spanned the river above the mill and near the 'Black Bull,' he went over the wall and, kneeling down behind it where he would be unseen, poured out his heart to God and prayed that he might be accepted and made a missionary to the heathen. ✓

Although he had been impressed so deeply, he did not act at once as we should have expected of one so impulsive. He continued his usual office work ; but his secret resolve to be a missionary lay dormant, to be revived later on when a favourable opportunity should come.

It is interesting to read Chalmers's naïve confessions as to the nature of the religious instruction given in his young days. Both at home and in school they had the catechism *ad nauseam* ; and on Sunday evenings, if not at church, a chapter was read and he was catechised upon it. He enjoyed reading Old Testament stories and the Revelation of St. John, but was often

perplexed by many of the statements in the Old Testament.

In the Highlands at that time folks worshipped a God of terror, and Mr. Meikle was looked upon as quite unorthodox because he preached a God of love. Chalmers heard sermons about the bottomless pit, everlasting punishment, and fire and brimstone, which affected him like a nightmare. These caused in him an antipathy to religion ; and as he could not feel that he was one of the elect, he came dangerously near abandoning the Church altogether.

But in November 1859 two evangelists from the north of Ireland arrived in Inveraray. Chalmers and some of his young chums were prepared to give them a hostile reception, to break up their meetings, and to prevent conversions. The first time, however, that he attended one of their services, he who went to scoff remained to pray. The singing and praying, and the intense earnestness of the

speakers deeply impressed him, and he hurried home greatly upset. On the following Sunday night at another meeting in the Free Church he was so filled with conviction of sin that he felt lost beyond all hope of salvation. On the Monday Mr. Meikle came to his help and led him to the glorious promises of God, and so he found the truth and believed in Christ as his Saviour. Immediately he returned to the Sunday School as a teacher, and began in his enthusiasm to address meetings in public ; his long-cherished vow to take the Gospel to the heathen came back afresh to his mind with compelling power, and he resolved to devote himself to his Master's service as a missionary.

Again the problem of ways and means presented itself. His parents were too poor to send him to the University, so it was evident that some other and less expensive method of training must be found. Meantime he set himself to improve his education ; and Mr. Meikle (of whose

church he had now become a member) gave him lessons, and helped to increase his scanty store of learning. Through his help and that of other friends he was appointed in 1861 an agent of the Glasgow City Mission, and was given a Mission district in the High Street in connection with Greyfriars United Presbyterian Church of which the minister was the Rev. Henry Calderwood, afterwards Professor of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh. He threw himself with characteristic energy into this work ; his Bible Class was attended by over 120 young men and women ; he visited the poor and neglected at their homes, preached in the open air, and carried on a vigorous campaign against drink. For eight months he toiled in the slums of the great city, and the experience he gained there was invaluable to him in after years. He himself has put on record that even in New Guinea he never saw (apart from cannibalism) sights more terrible for degradation and

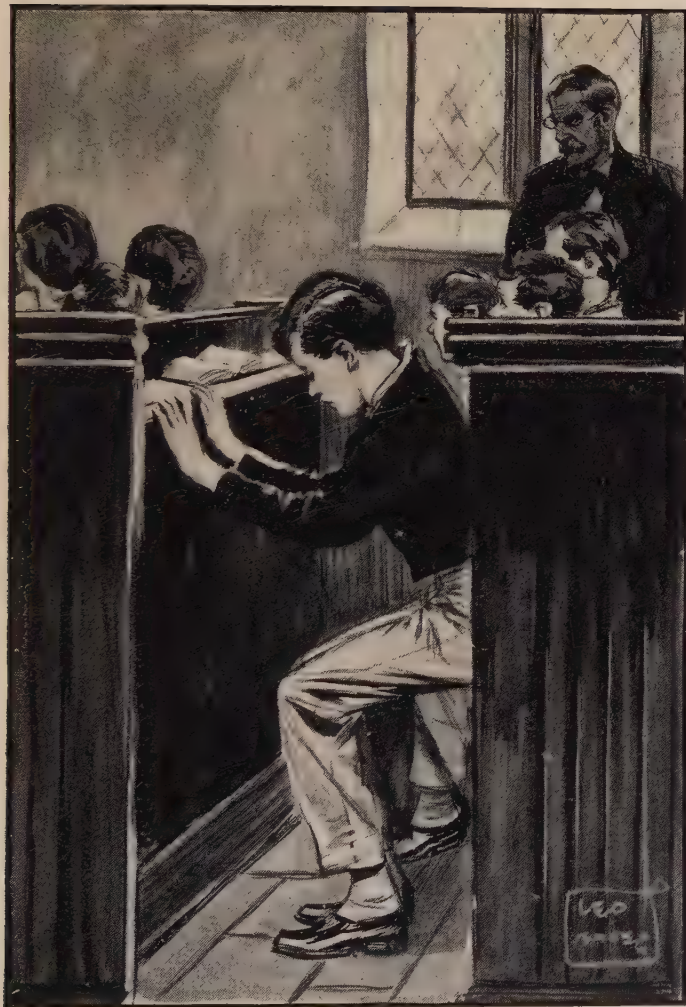
impurity than he had seen in the slums of Glasgow.

It was Chalmers's intention when he was in Glasgow to prepare for entering the United Presbyterian Church. It was Dr. Turner—an Ayrshire man who had been a missionary in Samoa—who directed his thoughts towards the London Missionary Society. He was accepted by the Society, and went to Cheshunt College to be trained. There he was greatly influenced for good by the revered Principal, Dr. Reynolds. After two years he was removed to Highgate where he remained for a year under Dr. Wardlaw in the Home for Students going abroad. His studies included Greek, Mathematics, and Theology ; he even studied Dutch for a time in the expectation that he might be sent to Africa, and he got some tuition in medicine in Dr. Epps's Homeopathic Hospital. Though he studied with diligence he never became a scholar, his talents lying in quite a different direction ; but the effect of the College teaching

was to widen his views and soften the hard and narrow outlines of the theology in which he had been brought up. During his student life he was very 'hard-up' financially, and had to practise a stern and sometimes painful economy; but he admitted that the lessons so taught him were of great value to him in after life.

One who knew him in those days described him as tall and thin, pale and freckled, with black hair, and hazel eyes with a continual sparkle in them; a frame lithe and muscular, a powerful skater and vigorous footballer, a man possessed of great will power and boundless courage, warm in his attachments, and always ready for practical jokes in which he loved to be the ringleader; also a vigorous and magnetic speaker who touched his audience by his loving earnestness.

While a student he effected his third rescue from drowning, by plunging into the river Lea to save a fellow-student who had got into difficulties while bathing. While



YOUNG CHALMERS MAKES UP HIS MIND

at Cheshunt he was placed in charge of a parish preaching station at Hertford Heath eight miles away ; and there he speedily gained the affection and esteem of the little congregation allotted to his care. Before his student days ended he became engaged to be married to a young lady so like-minded to himself that he described her as ‘ a thorough missionary.’

CHAPTER II

IN THE ISLAND OF RAROTONGA

'And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds

Which he may read who binds the sheaf
Or builds the house or digs the grave,
And those wild eyes that watch the wave
In roarings round the coral reef.'

ON leaving Highgate Chalmers went for some months to Plumstead, near Woolwich, for further tuition. Here he lived in the hospitable home of the Rev. Hugh Hercus, and on 17th October 1865 he was married to Mr. Hercus's niece Jane. A Congregationalist, and daughter of Mr. Peter Hercus of Greenock and afterwards of New Zealand, she was a lady of exceptional gifts and graces, and the eldest of four children who were early left motherless. Upon her devolved the responsibility of bringing up the family, and the experience rendered her

staid and thoughtful. It was in Glasgow in 1861 that she first met her future husband. She spent some time in Leeds as a schoolmistress where her chief friend was a Miss Sarah Large, who, strange to say, became in after years Chalmers's second wife. Two days after his marriage James Chalmers was ordained as a missionary in Finchley (East End) Chapel. It was arranged that he should be sent to Rarotonga.

The operations of the London Missionary Society in the South Seas began in Tahiti in 1796, and its operations gradually spread to the Leeward Islands, the Society Islands, and the Low Islands. The famous John Williams did pioneer work in the New Hebrides group, and suffered martyrdom in Erromanga in 1839. In fifty years nine of the seventeen groups of islands in the Pacific became christianised.

It was John Williams who directed attention to the needs of Rarotonga, and he made it latterly the centre of his missionary operations.

Rarotonga is one of those countless islands that stud the great Pacific, many of which may be represented on the map by little more than a mere dot. It is the largest of the Hervey group, and is about 2000 miles north-east of New Zealand and 600 miles south-west of Tahiti. In extent it is only 31 square miles, and its population in Williams's day was 7000. It is surrounded by an outer reef of black coral, against which the waves of the Pacific rise in majestic grandeur and break in silvery spray. There are openings in this reef by which ships and canoes can approach the island, but the harbours are not very safe. There is a fine sandy beach, then a fertile tract of level land covered with groves of cocoanut, chestnut, bread-fruit, and banana trees; and in the interior the mountains rise to 3000 feet. It is an island of great beauty and fertility.

Before the advent of the missionaries the natives had lived constantly in a state of tribal war; and licentiousness, cruelty,

infanticide, and cannibalism were rampant. By the time James Chalmers arrived the whole population was semi-civilised and law-abiding, though many were Christians only in name. John Williams, remarking on the changes wrought in his time, said that in 1823 all were heathens, knew no Sabbath, and had no written language; in 1834 all were professing Christians, the idols were destroyed, three places of Christian worship had been erected, and the people were worshipping God every Sabbath and reading the Bible in their own tongue. Before leaving the island John Williams founded a college for educating intelligent young natives to do missionary work, and in addition to other subjects they were taught the English language, and several mechanical arts.

When John Williams was martyred in Erromanga the children of the home country raised over £6000 to build a memorial missionary ship which should bear his name and assist the work of the

missions in the South Seas. The first *John Williams* did good service for twenty years, and then was wrecked on Danger Island. It was in the second *John Williams* that James Chalmers and his wife sailed from Gravesend for Australia on 4th January 1866.

It was an eventful voyage. They had a rough time in the Channel and put into Weymouth for repairs, but as they went south the weather improved. Chalmers held 'prayers' in the saloon, preached on Sundays, and started a Bible Class for the men on board. They arrived at Adelaide on 20th May, and proceeded to Sydney; then left Sydney in August for the New Hebrides in order to land two passengers at Aneiteum, when unexpectedly and to their great dismay the vessel struck upon a hidden reef with every inch of canvas set. She hung there for some days, the pumps being kept going continuously. At last she was got off in a damaged condition, and temporarily patched up to enable her to return

to Sydney for repairs. On this trip she was accompanied, for safety, by the *Dayspring*. Chalmers says, 'We lost everything by salt water,' but the people at Sydney showed them much kindness, and in six weeks they were able to sail again for Aneiteum. There they landed their passengers and goods, and proceeded to the Loyalty Islands and finally to Niue or Savage Island, where they received a kindly welcome from Dr. and Mrs. George Lawes.

They were preparing next to proceed to Samoa when another disaster, this time an irretrievable one, occurred on 8th January 1867; about midnight the *John Williams* was dashed against the barrier reef of Savage Island by the force of the wind and the tide and became a total wreck. To appreciate the difficulty and danger of navigation among these South Sea Islands it must be remembered that the formation of a coral island is in shape that of a subterranean mountain rising sharply to a summit, and on the slopes of this lie the

adherent walls of coral which form the barrier reef. Outside the reef there is no anchorage, for the water is of unfathomed depth. Anchored to the reef the ship is safe so long as the wind blows from the shore ; the moment the wind—or even the tide—changes the ship may be driven on the fangs of the coral unless it can save itself by sailing out to sea.

When the *John Williams* struck she had seventy souls on board, and a great cargo of provisions. She struck with a fearful crash, and the rain came down in torrents. Eventually and with great difficulty the people were got off safely in boats and part of the cargo was saved, but Chalmers lost nearly all his belongings. For six weeks he remained on the island as a guest at the Mission house. Then a schooner belonging to the Samoan Trading Company called at the island and took the Mission party to Samoa. From Samoa to Rarotonga they sailed on a ship belonging to Bully Hayes, a notorious pirate captain, but who, on the

testimony of Chalmers, behaved like a thorough gentleman, and not only made no objection to the services which Chalmers held on board, but wanted to make attendance compulsory ! The weather proved very unpropitious, and it was not till 20th May 1867 that Chalmers's adventurous voyage was over and he arrived at Avarua, in Rarotonga, and was carried ashore by a native. The native inquired ' What fellow name belong you ? ' ' Chalmers,' was the reply, and the native called out ' Tamate ' to his fellows on shore, and so Chalmers was called ever after.

Chalmers and his wife received a cordial welcome, for their help was much needed. But strange to say Chalmers's first feeling was one of disappointment. His job was too easy ! He had looked for something more difficult. He wanted to be among the real heathen, the savages and the cannibals, and he found himself in an island where everybody seemed civilised and christianised already ! He expressed

his disappointment to the Directors of the Society, and begged them to send him to the New Hebrides instead. But this was only a passing mood ; he remained in Rarotonga for ten years ; years that were full of happiness and of strenuous work. His first efforts were directed to the rebuilding and repair of Mission premises which had been seriously damaged by two hurricanes in two successive years. Under his care the institution increased in numbers and efficiency. He taught the students Grammar, Church History, and Scripture, and he encouraged them to plant the land and grow their own food. Every day was filled with work ; he preached every Sunday, and once a month visited other stations in the island and conducted services there. In his leisure time he prepared commentaries on the Bible and wrote school books for the use of the students.

Even in this beautiful island the greatest obstacle to the Gospel was the fearful curse of drunkenness. Strange that in every

country of the world and every island of the sea the most successful weapon in the devil's armoury seems to be intoxicating drink. Savage and civilised both succumb to this cruel Moloch. In Rarotonga the missionaries had to contend both with foreign imported liquor and native beer made from oranges. It was a custom to retreat into the bush, brew liquor in secret there, and carry on unseemly orgies. Chalmers immediately declared war to the knife against drink, turned policeman, and tracked the drink-makers to their lair, and succeeded in greatly lessening the evil. Speaking of those who imported liquor he wrote: 'I believe were thinking men at home to see the effects of drink upon these natives they would never taste another drop, but would rise up to a man and cry shame upon those men who not only break the laws of a weak people, but also give them in exchange for their labour or money or goods, a poison which is destroying them fast.' To do away with abuses which had

even crept into native Communion services, he latterly made it a rule to use only bread and cocoanut milk in the Sacrament, dispensing entirely with wine.

Chalmers had enough commonsense to adopt any expedient, however novel or unconventional, that would help the people. Having accidentally come across some poor drunkards carrying out a kind of drill, it immediately occurred to him to utilise this in the service of the Mission. He encouraged the 'volunteers' to form a corps, and to attend church, assisted to provide them with a uniform, formed them into classes, for reading, writing, and arithmetic, held a Bible Class for them every Sunday—a Boys' Brigade in Rarotonga! Soon the boys began eagerly to plant the land and work so as to be able to get new clothes and be able to drill and attend church. Drilling became popular and drinking diminished. There were full pews instead of empty ones; and when it became necessary to repair the church, these

young men cut the coral required and became practically helpful in all church work.

Chalmers also rigged up a rude printing-press, and began to issue regularly a small paper. He also started a Rechabite Society which was entirely managed by natives. Of course there were some narrow-minded people who objected to these developments. The Rev. Henry Royal, who had been a missionary for forty years, remonstrated with his younger brother Chalmers for indulging in 'novel methods of administering religious ordinances through the medium of military evolutions.'

There were some who said that it was foolish of Chalmers to attempt to stop the drinking of native beer, and that it did little harm. He roundly declared they talked nonsense. He had seen the natives in every stage of intoxication, from being talkative and quarrelsome to being dead drunk; he had seen them attacking their wives, throwing their children out of doors,

and setting their houses on fire. The testimony of beachcombers, who looked on the missionary with hatred, was, he contended, not worth listening to. The British Government had put down kidnapping, but kidnapping was harmless compared with the introduction of vile rum and gin brought in by men who would sell their souls to make a few dollars. Unfortunately also he had to lament that he came across Europeans and Americans in the island who were more degraded than the worst of the natives. It is clear that in dealing with such problems as these, Chalmers's experiences in the slums of Glasgow must have been of great value to him.

In the midst of his struggles and successes came the saddening news of the death of his father, who had gone to work one morning in repairing the roadway near Inveraray, and was found lying dead by the roadside.

Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers made a regular

visitation of every home in the island ; they encouraged the natives to keep their houses clean and tidy ; they read the Bible and engaged in prayer in each house. When Chalmers needed relaxation from his studies he threw down his books and did mountain - climbing. He ascended every mountain in the island, and felt the exercise was a splendid tonic. To suit the mentality of the natives he had to make his services short, not more than an hour and ten minutes at most, otherwise the audience flagged and got drowsy. As he gained experience he came to the conclusion that European missionaries to Rarotonga might gradually be decreased in number and native Christians encouraged to depend more upon their own abilities and resources.

To show what Christianity was able to do for those natives let us look a moment at the case of Teava. In his youth a heathen and cannibal, he had fought with and captured men, killed and cooked and

helped to eat them. In manhood he was converted, became a true soldier of the Cross, and helped to lead others to the Saviour. He himself became a missionary and was sent to Samoa as a pioneer. Voyaging in an open canoe from island to island at the risk of his life, he strove to remove the prejudices of the people and to prepare the way for a European missionary. Subsequently he returned to Rarotonga, and there Chalmers met him and learned to admire him. He was always first at a meeting, coming early to ask a blessing before the service began. He was always ready to speak, and because of his long experience could preach as few others could. He was a great student of Scripture, and had a great delight in reading *The Pilgrim's Progress* ; and great was his influence for good among the chiefs.

A day's work in the life of Chalmers in Rarotonga was something like this. At half-past five prayer meeting. Then breakfast, followed by prayers in English. Then



BULLY HAYES LANDS CHALMERS AND PARTY

medicine-dispensing till 8 o'clock. Teaching students till 10, mechanical or industrial instruction till 12 when dinner was taken. Rest or recreation for two hours ; bath and change into clean clothes ; then superintend printing office till tea at 4. Then visit the sick or other church members requiring visitation. At 6 lamps lit and prayers said in Rarotongan and English ; further study till 9 ; and retire to rest at 10.

At Avarua, where Chalmers was stationed, the church was improved and repaired at a cost of £700, and was re-opened in January 1877, and in the same year Mr. and Mrs. Wyatt Gill arrived to take up the work.

Chalmers had now been ten full years in Rarotonga ; he was thirty-six years of age, and he had developed in many ways and had accomplished much for the island. He had re-organised and directed the Students' College, prepared text-books, expounded the Scriptures, studied various dialects, and had co-operated with the

chiefs in the government of the people. The Directors had every reason to be satisfied with what he had done ; and to his great delight they decided to send him to New Guinea. As he had had no furlough they suggested that he should in the first instance visit England, but he replied that he felt no need for returning to the home country 'so soon,' and prepared to go at once to his new sphere of duty.

CHAPTER III

AT NEW GUINEA

‘The slender Coco’s drooping crown of flowers,
The lightning flash of insect and of bird,
The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean fowl,
The league-long roller thundering on the surf.’

NEW GUINEA is (if we leave Australia out of the count) the largest island in the world. Place one end of the island on London, the other would reach Constantinople. It lies about 80 miles north of Australia, and is separated from it by the Torres Straits. It is in shape like a huge saurian ; it is nearly 1500 miles in length and 480 broad at its widest part, and in area it is three times the size of Great Britain. It was first discovered by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century ; and in 1793 the East India Company would have taken possession but the British Government refused its permission. In 1848 the Dutch annexed

the western portion. English explorers, and in particular Captain Moresby—whose name is perpetuated in the famous harbour, Port Moresby—surveyed the eastern coast and adjacent islands and endeavoured vainly to get Britain to take possession. In 1883 Sir Thomas McIlwraith, Governor of Queensland, alarmed by a rumour of German annexation, formally annexed the whole eastern half of the island; but his act was repudiated by Lord Derby on behalf of the Home Government. Germany promptly annexed the northern part of the east end of the island, and Britain followed by proclaiming a Protectorate over the southern part in 1884—and thus added to her dominions a territory twice the size of England.

When Chalmers went to New Guinea little more than the coastline had been explored. But it was known that the island was a land of magnificent mountains rising above the snow line, and of numerous and vast rivers—one of which,

the Fly River, was at least 600 miles long ; a land containing millions of acres of rich grass, yet where flocks and herds were unknown ; a land of mighty trees where the inhabitants were content to live in crazy thatched huts that looked like beehives or hay-stacks propped on wooden piles ; a land rich in minerals, but where a ' fig ' of tobacco would purchase more than a nugget of gold ; a land where the inhabitants were living in the Stone Age, used bows and arrows, and practised cannibalism, and were almost continuously engaged in the ' sanguinary work of mutual extermination.'

A live Papuan in ' high-dress ' was indeed a fearsome sight. He had a huge shock of frizzy hair which was crowned by a plume of cassowary or bird-of-paradise feathers almost doubling his height ; he carried a spear ; he wore an ornament of the size and shape of a pencil stuck through the septum of his nose ; his ear lobes were perforated and distended to accommodate

heavy shell or bamboo ornaments. He wore a waist-belt of shells, a band of cowrie shells round his forehead, and shell armlets and anklets. He was extensively tattooed, and painted with fancy stripes of black or yellow or scarlet paint. His teeth and lips were so stained with betel-nut juice that they seemed to be dyed in blood. Of what we call clothing he wore nothing, and he rarely washed. He was a strange compound of cruelty, fear, vice, superstition, and ignorance. He had developed thieving into a fine art, and he was completely under the dominion of the sorcerer. All sickness was regarded as witchcraft, and in every case of illness a victim had to be found to appease the deities. 'Spiritism' was universally believed in, all the common phenomena of spiritualism flourished, and the Psychical Research Society would have had a magnificent field for its activities in Papua.

The fauna of Papua include pigs, dogs, wallabies, fowls, lizards, various kinds of

snakes, rats, and mice. Crustacea, grubs and maggots are all valued as food by the natives. The birds and butterflies are numerous and beautiful; parrots, cockatoos, and birds of paradise with exquisite colours and magnificent feathers are abundant; but the deadliest enemy of the white man is the persistent and insatiable mosquito. The trees, plants, and fruits that flourish on the island include rubber, coffee, bread-fruit, mango, coconut, sago, arrowroot, yam, sweet potato, sugar-cane, fig, and banana; nature is prodigally abundant, but little has yet been done by European settlers to take advantage of the island's rich resources.

Many of the native villages are like clusters of birds' nests built on piles either above the sea or above some river, and reached by shaky ladders. As you walk over the roughly-made floor you can see the green water beneath. Two objects were gained by this method of construction: more freedom from attack by

enemies, and a cooler atmosphere. Even where the villages were built on land the same method was adopted, and doubtless helped to keep the houses freer from rats and mice, lizards, and such creatures. Each house was surrounded by a verandah on which the natives 'loafed' in the sun. But in addition to the ordinary dwellings, each village contained a *dubu* or club house, from which women were generally excluded, and which served both for debating communal questions and for practising the debasing rites of superstitious worship. These huge thatched houses were sometimes five or six hundred feet in length, and they always contained weapons of war, grinning horrible masks, and an array of human skulls.

When Chalmers arrived in New Guinea in September 1877, a stalwart, bronzed, unclerical-looking figure, he was not at all charmed with the appearance presented by Port Moresby with its shabby buildings and its adjacent fever-haunted mangrove

swamps. He landed and visited the school, where he saw forty children being taught to read ; in the afternoons he watched the women of the village making pottery from clay, to be afterwards taken to another part of the island and bartered for sago. Then he took a trip inland to see what was being done for the natives living on the mountain slopes, and he returned weary and footsore, and expressing a fervent wish that ' shoe-makers had to wear the boots they made for missionaries ! '

Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers selected Suau (or Stacey Island) as their first home in New Guinea. Here they were among swarms of cannibals who wore necklaces of human bones. But presents were exchanged and a quarrel avoided. A suitable site for a mission station was agreed upon, and while the house was being built Chalmers and his wife accepted the rude hospitality of a chief, and lived behind a low partition in his house ; a house that had an arsenal of spears and other deadly weapons, and was

adorned with human skulls. The *Mayri*, a seven-ton lugger which had brought Chalmers and his goods, was anchored close to the shore, and one day when Chalmers was going to the boat he was surrounded by an armed and painted crowd of savages demanding tomahawks, knives, hoop iron, and beads, and threatening murder if they did not get them. One fellow, wearing as ornament a human jaw-bone and carrying a stone club, threatened Chalmers's life. The missionary looked him straight in the face ; ' You may kill us,' he said, ' but you will get nothing from us by force.' His terrified native assistant advised giving a small present, but Chalmers was firm, and reminded his opponent that he had come unarmed among the natives as their friend. Gradually the natives retired, and next morning work was resumed as if nothing had happened, and the chief came and apologised for the behaviour of the people.

When living in the chief's house Mrs

Chalmers used to sit on the platform sewing or knitting. Bocasi, a fine-looking young warrior, sat beside her and taught her the native language while she taught him knitting. The natives were very thievish and troublesome, stealing everything they could lay their hands on ; but politeness, patience, and firmness prevented quarrels. The strain, however, and the climate brought on a sharp illness, and then many of the natives showed their kindness, and brought fruit, vegetables, and fish. ‘ We received numerous invitations to feasts,’ says Chalmers ; ‘ some of which were cannibal feasts ! ’ With quite mistaken kindness one native offered Mrs. Chalmers a bit of cooked human flesh. Chalmers was offered the chief’s daughter in marriage, and was told he would never be a great chief with only one wife.

Just before Christmas a serious affray took place. Some of the crew who were ashore getting wood and water got into trouble with the natives, and shots were

fired. Chalmers went to see what had happened and found that the angry natives had seized the vessel and that it would soon be ashore. Learning that some of the crew had been wounded, he rushed back to the house for bandages; then on going aboard he found that the captain had been speared and was leaning helpless against the mast. He also noticed the dead body of a native who had been shot. To take the latter ashore when the natives were in such an excited condition would have been to provoke an instant massacre; but Chalmers, acting with tact and courage, got into touch with the principal chiefs and had an assurance from them that no attack would be made. There was great wailing and lamentation that night, and in the darkness messengers came to Chalmers and warned him to depart at once or he would be murdered. Chalmers consulted his wife and his little band of native teachers, but all agreed that as they had come for the good of the

native and to preach the Gospel they should stay and put their trust in God.

That night, when the *Mayri* left, Chalmers remarked that the die was cast, for the bridge to safety was now broken. For days they had an anxious time ; they had to watch as well as to pray, and they were in constant peril. They took turns of keeping watch at night ; on one occasion Chalmers had hardly fallen asleep when his wife awoke him : ‘ Quick ! ’ she said, ‘ they are breaking into the house.’ Chalmers rushed to the door (which was only a piece of sail-cloth !) and faced a large armed party who came demanding compensation. He explained that he could give them nothing more. Being threatened with death he said : ‘ Well, if we are to die we shall die fighting,’ and then for the first time he took down his musket, put in some powder and shot, and ordering the people across the fence they had broken down, he said, ‘ Now go ! for the first man who crosses that fence again will be killed.’

His firmness impressed them ; they retired to hold a consultation, and the upshot was that the canoes which had come for the attack returned home. And thus by the force of his personality Chalmers established a firm foothold among those cannibals. It was only later that he learned how much he owed to the eloquence of the old chief. ' Before this white man came,' said the chief, ' I was nobody. He has brought me tomahawks, hoop iron, beads, and cloth ; if you try to kill him you will kill him over my body.' Gradually the people became more friendly, and when the steamer *Ellangowan* appeared (a gift to the Mission from Miss Baxter of Dundee) the natives were delighted and ready to forget all about the *Mayri* affair.

Chalmers began a thorough exploration of his Mission district. In the spring of 1878 he and his wife embarked on the *Ellangowan*, and cruised from east to west along the south coast, visiting at least ninety villages where a white man had

never been seen before, and travelling on foot over large tracts of territory. Chalmers resolved to travel unarmed, though a musket was carried on the ship for shooting game. His garb was a white shirt, flannel trousers, and black boots ; in one hand he carried an umbrella and in the other his satchel containing his 'swag.' The latter did not include either Testaments or tracts, but some clothing, beads, jews' harps, looking-glasses, knives, and matches.

Some of his experiences were very amusing. He sits down on a convenient stone, nobody comes close, although thousands are in the bush watching every movement. At length an old woman with shaven head ventures near, touches his hand with curiosity, then touches his boot ; Chalmers takes his boot off, the woman thinks it is his foot and rushes off screaming. The natives gather courage and approach. Chalmers shuts up and opens his umbrella and shouts of admiration and amazement

are heard ; he strikes a match and the shouts are redoubled ; he is looked upon now as a wizard ; he shows his watch and lets them hear it tick ; soon he is surrounded by a curious but suspicious crowd, who get him to show his bare arms and chest, and express their admiration at their whiteness, and who take with huge delight a hair from his beard to serve as a ' charm.' At another time he produces some salt, and every grain of it is eagerly licked up, the natives being as fond of it as children are of sweets. But, alas ! one day as he was taking some sugar with his meal a native demanded some under the belief that it was salt. He would not be persuaded that it was something quite different ; insisted upon getting some, and the moment he tasted it made a wry face and spat it out.

One chief refused to make friends, and returned the offered presents. As he was surrounded by a jostling crowd Chalmers thought it prudent to return to the boat, but one man with a huge club followed

immediately behind him. Chalmers felt he would be happier if he had possession of that club, and having a piece of hoop-iron in his hand he wheeled round, presented it to the savage, and disarmed him of the weapon, and all got safely away.

A disconcerting episode, showing what travellers in New Guinea may have to put up with, occurred in one village far away from the coast. Spreading his chart out on the floor of a native hut, Chalmers was tracing his journey on it, when strange drops fell down around him from a bulky parcel overhead. Jumping up to see what was the cause, he discovered that it was 'grandmother's remains' which were being dried! 'It spoiled our dinner,' he says.

Chalmers's pity was stirred by the evident state of fear in which the natives continually lived. They supposed every stranger to be an enemy. In some houses a net of shells was hung across the entrance so that the door could not be opened without a noise that would awaken the inmates if

they were asleep ; and then clubs and spears which stood ready to their hands would be seized at once. Noises in the night made them tremble with terror.

To such people it was that, first through an interpreter and afterwards in their own tongue, Chalmers preached the astounding news of the Universal Father and the Saviour Who had come to earth to redeem men. To hear of a God of Love and of a resurrection from the dead made, as a rule, a profound impression upon them ; but in many cases the news was received with incredulity.

On one of his expeditions Chalmers left his wife at Suau with the native teachers. All the natives were highly pleased. ‘ See how Tamate trusts us ! ’ they said. ‘ He cannot mean us harm or he would not have left his wife in our care.’ So they treated Mrs. Chalmers kindly, brought her food, and urged her to ‘ eat plenty ’ that she might look well on her husband’s return. Yet she could not help feeling how pre-

carious was her condition surrounded as she was by a horde of cannibals, and utterly unable to send any communication to her husband. Unfortunately her health began to fail, and Chalmers resolved to take her to Sydney in the hope that with rest and change her strength would be restored. From Chalmers's diary we learn how much he missed his wife's presence and help. Meanwhile he busied himself in visiting old and establishing new stations and in translating the Gospel of Mark and some hymns into the native tongue.

The arrival of a new colleague in January 1879 made it possible for him at last to take a furlough, and he made preparations for going home. But when he got the length of Cooktown he learned from a paragraph in a newspaper the startling and sorrowful intelligence of the death of his wife from consumption on 20th February at Sydney. It was a terrible blow, and it naturally upset all his plans ; and after a visit to his wife's relatives in Sydney and Dunedin

he returned to New Guinea to resume his work. His bereavement only led to greater consecration ; and in his diary we read such aspirations as these : ‘ How I long for more entire consecration to His service. Oh, to dwell at His cross and to abound in blessed sympathy with Him and His great work ! God help us by Thy Spirit. We want the heathen for Christ ! ’

CHAPTER IV

EXPLORATIONS AND ANNEXATIONS

‘ God of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle-line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts be with us yet,
Lest we forget, lest we forget !’

JAMES CHALMERS became the pioneering and travelling missionary of New Guinea ; W. G. Lawes, stationed at Port Moresby, was its literary and educational missionary. ‘ I have no wish whatever to turn explorer,’ said Chalmers, ‘ but I do wish to know all that is to be known about New Guinea.’ And he did not spare himself in this effort. It was his constant aim to open up new stations both inland and on the coast. His Directors sometimes were hampered for want of money ; ‘ but,’ said Chalmers, ‘ it were better that we should all live on vegetables than that one station should be

given up or one teacher withdrawn.' Another great difficulty was the repeated attacks of fever caused by the unhealthy climate. When natives turned ill, they, as a rule, gave up all hope and let themselves die ; and even Chalmers at times felt, and had difficulty in fighting against, the great feeling of depression caused by physical illness. He always preferred any amount of hard work to writing reports ; and his colleague Dr. Lawes, who was a great admirer of his abilities, prophesied that he would become the Livingstone of New Guinea.

One tragic event in March 1881 was the massacre at Kalo, carried out at the instigation of the chief, Quaipo, by which twelve persons, chiefly native teachers and their wives, were slain. The principal teacher murdered was Andrea, a native of Rarotonga, whom Chalmers himself had helped to train, and who was both a good teacher and a good compositor. Placed at Kerepunu in New Guinea he had done

excellent work, and was on the best of terms with his people. He was on a visit to Kalo and was in a whale-boat with his companions when the tragedy occurred.

That morning some trouble had broken out between the Kalo people and the wives of the native teachers, a massacre was determined on, and the signal for the fight was given by the chief, who stepped into the whale-boat, seized a tomahawk, and killed Andrea.

The deed created such a stir that the Government sent Commodore Wilson with his flagship to demand satisfaction, although the missionaries were strongly opposed to this action. The chief was defiant and said he would not be satisfied till he had Chalmers's skull too ; but one volley fired by the marines, which killed the chief and several of his men, was sufficient to bring the whole tribe into submission, and with the aid of Chalmers, peace was made with the people.

After Chalmers's death an agent of the

London Missionary Society visited the scene of this massacre, was welcomed by the native pastor and by all the villagers, and found a large church erected for Christian worship where the people gathered every Sunday, and read the Gospel and sang hymns in their own tongue ; and he felt that the change which had been wrought was profound.

In 1882 Chalmers paid a visit to South Cape and contrasted the condition of the natives then with what it had been only four years before. Then they had lived in gross darkness and cruelty, counting that chief as greatest who had slain most victims and gathered most skulls. Now for two years there had been no murder or cannibalism. Tribes formerly hostile, who could not meet except to fight, now sat side by side in the church, worshipping the true God, and delivered from the fear of evil spirits. Instead of war-cries or songs they were singing ' Come to Jesus ' and ' I have a Father in the Promised Land ' ;

and they who had formerly sought to slay the missionaries were now anxious to assist them even to the washing of their feet. Preaching, Chalmers quickly found out, was only a small part of a missionary's duty. The continual moving about among the people, teaching them to clear the bush, to fence and cultivate their land, to keep their houses clean and tidy, and the influence of a Christian example as manifested in all the routine of ordinary life in work and in play—these were the means by which the Gospel spread. 'Before faithful preaching and earnest living Satan's strongholds fall.' No doubt the natives were savages and often very cruel, but Chalmers found that 'when you get to know them you love them and seek their good.' Nor would he for a moment allow any one to talk of the 'sacrifices' a missionary has to make. The word 'sacrifice,' he said, should never be used by any one who was serving Christ, and who could appreciate the sacrifice of Christ for us.

Chalmers, however, could not help being amused at the ideas of some of the natives who met him for the first time, and wondered why he had come.

‘Do you grow cocoa-nuts in your country?’ they asked. ‘No.’ ‘Yams?’ ‘No’; ‘Sago?’ ‘No’; ‘Sweet potatoes?’ ‘No.’ ‘Ah! we know now why you came; it’s because you have no food in Beritani. (Britain)!’

One of Chalmers’s colleagues objected strongly to the amount of tobacco used by the missionaries in their work—not by the missionaries themselves, be it observed, but as the means of securing the friendship of the natives. But Lawes and Chalmers both defended its use, as it was really the currency of the island at the time, and a gift of it was a sign of peace and friendship.

In October 1883 Chalmers went on one of the most extraordinary of his expeditions. Every autumn natives of Port Moresby who were skilled in the making of pottery sent cargoes of it to the Elema district to

be exchanged for sago. This annual barter was the only form of native trade ; it was long prepared for and eagerly looked forward to. The ships that conveyed the cargoes were called 'lakatois,' and were really made of a large number of canoes lashed together, and they carried huge and peculiarly shaped sails, resembling the wings of some mammoth insect.

Chalmers agreed to accompany the expedition ; and as it was the first time a white man had ever done this, great interest was taken in the matter. On the vessel by which he sailed there were thirty-five people, including crew and passengers, and there was a heavy cargo ; and the voyage was not exactly a safe or pleasant one. But after five days on board he reached his destination. He also visited Orokolo and made friends with the cannibal chiefs. The native temple was put at his disposal—a long hall 160 feet in length and 30 feet wide, in which were various assortments of the skulls of men, women,

children, crocodiles, and wild boars. Chalmers's two native helpers preached in this building to a crowd of savage cannibals; it was a weird scene, but curiosity was aroused, and all night long the natives talked with the teachers, and in the morning they came to a unanimous resolution which they thus expressed: 'No more fighting, Tamate; no more man-eating: we have heard the good news, and we shall strive for peace.'

We come now to what might be called the comedy of the British annexation of Papua—or South-East New Guinea. Between 4th April 1883 and 4th November 1884 the British flag was hoisted three times, and each time it was unfurled from a missionary flagstaff. The Premier of Queensland was responsible for the first hoisting of the flag, but the actual performer was Mr. Chester, Police Magistrate of Thursday Island. It was the rumour that there was gold in the island which

caused Queensland to cast a covetous eye upon it. The fear of the missionaries was that the labour question might become acute, and that the missions might suffer and the natives be ill-treated if Queensland labour vessels came to New Guinea. But Chalmers, as in duty bound, gave his assistance to the ceremony though naturally amazed that an Australian Colony should annex such a huge territory by means of a Police Magistrate in a little tub of a cutter. However, Mr. Chester landed at Port Moresby, and hoisted the Union Jack at the Mission station ; a salute was fired and presents made to the natives, while the missionaries explained as best they could the nature of the proceedings. This action, as we know, was disavowed by the Home Government. But some things that Chalmers feared took place. A Sydney syndicate actually bought 15,000 acres of splendid sugar-growing land for a penny an acre, and they had never even seen the real owner ! Some of Chalmers's out-

spoken remarks in defence of the rights of the native, roused resentment, but although he was called a 'tyrant missionary' he was determined to do all he could to prevent the natives being swindled out of their possessions.

The next flag-raising took place when Mr. H. H. Romilly, who had been sent out by Lord Derby, arrived in the *Harrier* at Port Moresby in November 1883, and promptly went through the same ceremony again. Mr. Romilly wrote of Chalmers: 'I find him a capital fellow to live with. He is utterly unlike a missionary. I overhauled his wardrobe and found that he hadn't even got a black coat and tie. But of all the missions in the Pacific there is none which has done better work than this now established in New Guinea.'

Three days later Commodore Erskine arrived with a squadron of British ships, and ignoring what had been done by his subordinate, Mr. Romilly, proceeded once more with the ceremony of hoisting the

flag. Crowds of natives came swarming around, and the assistance of Lawes and Chalmers was again called in. Commodore Erskine visited the Mission school where 120 children were assembled, put them through an examination and heard them sing the National Anthem and repeat the Lord's Prayer. Later in the month, one of the ships with Chalmers on board proceeded eastward to raise the flag at various strategic points. It was done in an imposing way, and each chief was presented with an ebony stick having a florin let into it so as to show the head of the Queen. This was the symbol of their authority, and they were very proud of it. One writer gives a very amusing description of the ceremony on board H.M.S. *Nelson*. The ship's officers and the native chiefs were both in full dress, and both wore feathers, the former on their helmets, the latter in their hair; but the conjunction was comical in the extreme, for it was a meeting of British sailors on modern war-

ships with men of the Stone Age from their canoes; the latter with their bird-of-paradise plumes far outshone the representatives of England. One of the principal natives had as chief ornament a twig of green leaves drawn through the lobe of his left ear. Afternoon tea with ships' biscuits and a tub of boiled rice with brown sugar was served on deck, and a photograph of the picturesque scene taken. It was as yet only a Protectorate that had been proclaimed, and it was not until September 1888 that the Protectorate was changed into actual Sovereignty by another proclamation of annexation, and on this occasion the natives were so far advanced that some hundreds of them were able to join in singing the National Anthem.

Commodore Erskine in his official report spoke with gratitude of the assistance he had received from Chalmers and Lawes, and with admiration for what they had achieved. 'These gentlemen who first

came to settle single-handed among those wild cannibal tribes about ten years ago, have by their firm and conciliatory dealings established such a hold over the natives as many a crowned head would be proud to possess. I have been lost in admiration of the influence which they command over those savage but intelligent people.'

Sir Peter Scratchley was appointed first Governor of New Guinea, and he also availed himself of Chalmers's services in making himself acquainted with the natives. On the formal annexation in 1888 Sir William McGregor was appointed Administrator. Chalmers was present at so many ceremonies of proclamation that as he facetiously remarked it was becoming monotonous, and the natives were coming to regard flag-hoisting and the firing of salutes as the white man's favourite amusement. But it had its serious side also, and Chalmers was glad that laws were passed making deportation of the natives illegal,

and prohibiting the introduction of intoxicants, opium, firearms, and explosives. As regards the question of clothing the native, Chalmers was convinced that it was a mistake to force the native to wear the garments of civilisation. Many comical sights were often seen in the native churches on account of an unwise policy of this kind being pursued. He thought it a much wiser and, upon the whole, a much healthier course, to allow the natives to retain their own social customs so long as they were innocuous.

Chalmers had completed twenty years' service in the mission field without a furlough home ; but now a strong appeal was made to him to go to England, not only for a needed rest and change, but to discuss mission problems with his Directors. He himself was a little reluctant to do so, he felt himself so much of a Bohemian in his habits, and he had so long mixed with savages that he had an exaggerated idea of his unfitness for the conventions and

restraints of civilised society. But on 11th May 1886 he left New Guinea for England, travelling *via* Sydney, Melbourne, and Bombay, and reached London in August.

CHAPTER V

A VISIT HOME

‘ And Nature cannot hear us moan ;
She smiles in sunshine ; raves in rain ;
The music breathed by Love alone
Can ease the World’s immortal pain.’

A MISSIONARY goes home on furlough to get a rest, but generally finds himself as hard worked as when abroad. If he is a good speaker the Church makes importunate demands upon his time, and he is kept travelling through the country delivering missionary addresses. In Chalmers’s case the curiosity to see and hear him was exceptional, and he found himself almost as much of a ‘ lion ’ as Dr. Livingstone himself was. He had been so long away, he came from such a mysterious country, and the rumour of his exploits had given him such a reputation that eager crowds pressed to hear him tell his own story. His

presence was attractive ; his stalwart figure, his bronzed face, his genial, unconventional, and modest manner were all in his favour. And although he was no orator the world is always ready to listen to a brave man who recounts the story of his own perils and adventures.

After his first meeting with the Directors of the Missionary Society in London, he had a continual series of engagements in the cities and towns of England and Scotland. Wherever he went he thrilled his audiences with the marvellous story he had to tell ; his burning enthusiasm was infectious, his earnest words and the trumpet tones of his voice, and the flashing of his dark eyes held his hearers spellbound, and through constant practice he became one of the finest missionary speakers of his day. And the constant burden of his message was the necessity for more workers if the crying needs of New Guinea were to be adequately met.

Nor were his activities confined to ad-

dressing meetings. He read papers by request before the Royal Geographical Society and the Colonial Institute, contributed numerous articles to newspapers and magazines, and although composition was to him most uncongenial labour, he wrote and saw through the press his little book entitled *Pioneering in New Guinea*.

It was of this book that Robert Louis Stevenson, some years later, wrote in his airy fashion to his friend Sidney Colvin :—

‘ I wish you to get *Pioneering in New Guinea* by James Chalmers. It is a missionary book, and has less pretensions to be literature than Spurgeon’s Sermons. Yet I think even through that, you will see some of the traits of the hero that wrote it, a man that took me fairly by storm for the most attractive, simple, brave, and interesting man in the whole Pacific. He is away now to go up the Fly River, a desperate venture, it is thought ; he is quite a Livingstone card.’

When in England Chalmers had a meet-

ing with the Earl of Onslow who suggested that he should take a position under Government in New Guinea, but his mind was made up to continue a missionary and not to be a Government official. He was emphatic in insisting that Christianity is the only civiliser, and that wherever you find any island in the Pacific where the natives are friendly to the white man it is because the Gospel has gone there first ; and he declared that although he should have to suffer over again all that he had endured during his twenty-one years of service, he would still be a missionary.

Naturally when he was in this country Chalmers paid a visit to his early home at Inveraray. He received a warm welcome from all ; the Duke of Argyll held a reception in his honour at the Castle at which the Marquis of Lorne was also present, and at which 800 people gathered to hear a missionary address on New Guinea ; and Chalmers at the Duke's request planted a memorial tree in the Castle grounds close

to one which had been planted by Dr. Livingstone. He returned to New Guinea in 1887, sailing from Plymouth on 15th June.

On board ship Chalmers's personality naturally asserted itself, for he seemed a born leader of men. He acted as chairman at the concerts, engaged in tug-of-war and all kinds of games, told stories and amused the youngsters, and on Sunday held religious services, which were attended by Protestants and Catholics, Greeks and Jews. On one occasion he spoke for an hour and a half of his own experiences, and his audience 'asked for more.'

In August Chalmers landed at Adelaide, was welcomed by representatives of the Press and of various public societies as well as by the clergy, and was entertained to a public breakfast by the prominent citizens. Here also he had offers from the Government to give up mission work and devote himself solely to exploration, but these were instantly declined. On landing at New

Guinea he stayed for a time with Mr. and Mrs. Lawes at Port Moresby, and then went to Motumotu, or Toaripi as it is also called, to take up work there.

Landing on New Guinea shores was always a difficult task, and Chalmers got drenched going through the surf. The people on the shore answered the shouts of the canoe party and came running to the beach to assist, carrying flaming coconut leaves as torches. When they realised that it was Tamate who had arrived there was a tremendous roar of excited welcome, and the chief himself came to welcome him and 'rub noses' with him.

Chalmers was saddened to receive news of the death of his best native teacher, a young Samoan named Tauraki whom he had stationed at Motumotu. Tauraki with his wife and child and ten natives left their home one Sunday night and went some distance down to an island at the mouth of the river, and spent the night there to be ready to start on a voyage in the morn-

ing. Their object was to sail up the river and collect the bulb used in making the best arrowroot. On their return on Tuesday, as they were approaching a bend of the river, they saw a large number of canoes which closed in upon them. Tauraki's wife urged him to fire to warn them off as she saw they meant to attack, but he would not do so, and soon the arrows began to fly. His child was wounded and then his wife, and two of the natives fell dead. The wife seized the fowling piece and fired, and the shot scared the assailants for a moment. Then her husband, standing up, with some arrows sticking in his flesh, began firing his rifle and at last the enemy took to flight. About midnight the little party got to the beach near their own house, but on landing the child died. The teacher and his wife were taken to the house of Mr. Edelfelt, the Government representative at Motumotu, but while the wife recovered Tauraki himself died, and five natives who had been in his canoe also died of their wounds. The

attack was really directed against the natives and not against Tauraki, the teacher, and if he had consented to go on board one of the enemies' canoes with his wife and child they would have been saved ; but he nobly refused to save his own life at the cost of those who were in his charge. Chalmers felt Tauraki's death as a personal loss and a great hindrance for the time being to the progress of his work.

In Chalmers's correspondence at this time we get glimpses of the kind of life he had to live day by day when at Motumotu. One day he tells us he went by canoe to visit Moveave with a boat-load of natives. ' We smoked and chatted all the way '—the chatting mostly done in ' pidgin ' English. When near the first village on the route they came suddenly upon a canoe with a husband and wife and two bairns in it. These poor people got a terrible fright. The husband flew to his bow and arrows ; and the mother and children were about to plunge into the river, when the

boat's crew shouted that they were friends and that Tamate was on board. The bow and arrows were put down and the family party slowly paddled near. Then a little tobacco helped to soothe them, though the children were still crying piteously, and the husband and wife trembling with fear.

Chalmers got them to go on ahead and warn the village people of the approach of the white man. On and on the Mission boat paddled and got into a narrow creek where if an attack had been made no escape would have been possible. The party landed, and soon armed natives were seen gathering round. But they were told they must not come armed, because it was a visit of peace and because Chalmers was coming among them quite unarmed. So obediently they put away their weapons, and came in great numbers to see the white missionary. 'They were glad, I believe, from the very depths of their hearts,' says Chalmers, 'that I had come to make friends with them.' And they showed their kind-

ness by the care they took of Tamate. They would not let him step on a muddy wet place, but insisted on carrying him over all the puddles. Then Chalmers divided among them some sticks of tobacco, and went afterwards through the bush to another village and got the same kind of reception. On his return to the first village he found that the natives had erected a shade for him constructed of cocoa-nut leaves, and there he sat and conversed with them on the miseries of war and the blessings of peace. They gave him presents of cocoa-nuts, betel nuts, and other treasures, and in return he gave them knives, looking-glasses, and jubilee medals, which were received with expressions of delight. 'It was a good time,' he says; and doubtless they would have said the same.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawes having to go on furlough to the Colonies, Chalmers went again to Port Moresby to take charge of the work of the Mission and the Training

College there. We find from his diary and correspondence that he did not believe in constant interference with the natives when their conduct was not exactly decorous. So long as it was merely 'fun' he was content to let them alone. But he insisted on discipline in his classes, on immediate attention being paid to the bell, and on duty being done at one telling. Dr. Lawes left behind him his Chinese cook who seems to have been an expert, and Chalmers wrote, 'I have been faring sumptuously every day, and feel as strong as an African lion.' He had nò patience with the constant demands from some quarters for 'statistics.' 'Our statistic system is all wrong; they will keep the statistics in Heaven, I feel sure, and I would leave them in their hands.' He reminded the folks at home that it was quite a mistake to think that missionaries had nothing to do but to preach sermons; it was the living, not the preaching, that was important. 'We have to begin at the beginning, teaching both

grown-up people and children the alphabet, and it is not an easy job, it takes time and patience.' He tells of a 'rainmaker' in a certain district who became interested in his services and to whom he taught this little prayer, 'Great Spirit of Love, give me light ; save me for Jesus' sake.'

Months afterwards on returning to the same district he found that the rainmaker had been killed. What had happened was this. The rainmaker was in the company of two Naara men when the chief of the Lolo tribe with whom they were at enmity came stealthily through the crowd to attack them with spears. The chief threw a spear which would have killed a Naara man, but the rainmaker stepped in front, received the spear in his own body, and saved the other by his own death. And as he lay dying he was heard to repeat over and over the prayer he had been taught, 'Great Spirit of Love, give me light ; save me for Jesus' sake !'

Chalmers liked 'working Christians,' and

he encouraged the native converts to take part in the services. A strange sight, he said, it was to see one naked man after another rise and speak earnestly. As a rule the native expressed himself with the simplicity of a child. One of the most striking cases was that of a young man who rose and said, 'Friends, if we do evil Jesus weeps, is pained ; if we do well, Jesus is pleased. I have finished.' He was naked ; he was intensely in earnest ; he spoke with pathos ; he was brief and to the point. The women, said Chalmers, generally read better than their husbands.

An amusing episode was the fuss caused by a telegram which Chalmers sent home in January 1887, and which to the uninitiated presented an alarming appearance. It was as follows :—

'Had several attacks of fever. Now well. Getting in trim for next season. Ask Jones, Devonshire Square, to send one gross tomahawks, one gross butchers' knives,' etc. etc.

Of course the deadly weapons for which Chalmers was sending a requisition were not meant to make war on the natives but to make friends with them, as these were the articles most useful in barter. But it was easy and natural for an ignorant person to misinterpret such a telegram.

While at Port Moresby Chalmers took trips east and west to visit mission stations, and was delighted to find many natives professing Christ and seeking baptism, and men who had been cannibals joining in singing hymns and having evening prayers in their houses.

On a visit to Kabadi he was accompanied by Mr. Romilly, who put the Government cutter at his disposal. At Redscar Bay they left the cutter and got into the whale-boat, but ill-luck here befell the party. The boat was capsized in the bay, and the seas were so heavy that the party lost their rifles and their food. It was a notoriously bad place for crocodiles, and the tossing about in the surf was terrible ; three times

Chalmers got on to the boat's keel and each time was swept away ; but with the aid of an oar he reached a sandbank and finally the shore ; and the shipwrecked party remained by the fire all night. Like Paul himself Chalmers was 'in perils oft' of various kinds. He also accompanied H.M.S. *Opal* to Kerepunu, and got some of the Kalo chiefs to go on board the ship. They were terribly frightened, but the captain took them to his cabin, spoke kindly to them, and gave them presents. Chalmers took them down into the stoke-hole, and when one of the furnaces was opened the natives thought their end had come, and they were glad to get on deck again and into their canoe. Such were the lights and shadows, the humours and the tragedies, of mission work in New Guinea.

CHAPTER VI

CHALMERS'S SECOND MARRIAGE—LIFE AT MOTUMOTU

'The patience of immortal love
Outwearying mortal sin.'

IF it is not good for an ordinary man to be alone, it is much worse for a missionary in an uncivilised country. Yet marriage in such circumstances demands heroism and self-denial on the part of the woman.

Chalmers's first wife, when she acted as a school teacher in Leeds, lodged in the house of a Mrs. Large and became very much attached to Mrs. Large's daughter, Sarah Eliza Large. As already stated they became close friends and kept up a regular correspondence. Chalmers also had met Miss Large when she was only seventeen, and of course had kept in touch with her through his wife's correspondence.

But when Mrs. Chalmers died the correspondence lapsed. Miss Large's family had been very well off, but unfortunately had suffered a reverse during the period of the Lancashire cotton famine. Miss Large married a Mr. Harrison, and was a wife for twenty years, when Mr. Harrison died. It was after the publication of his *Work and Adventure in New Guinea* that Chalmers received an unexpected but welcome letter from Mrs. Harrison ; and when he went home to England he visited her and renewed his friendship ; they corresponded with each other and finally became engaged, and it was at length arranged that she should go out to be married, and he would go as far as Cooktown to meet her.

Chalmers arrived at Cooktown on the morning of 6th October 1888, and he insisted on getting married the same day, as he thought it well to lose no time. He took her to the parsonage where the Rev. Canon Taylor performed the ceremony in the presence of a few friends. It was all

over in a few minutes, he says, and they were about to return to the hotel when the Canon asked them to come back, and they obeyed only to be drowned in a shower of rice and old shoes.

The vessel in which they sailed to New Guinea was the *Harrier*, and it rolled and pitched terribly, and Mrs. Chalmers was very sick. But she was charmed with the first sight she got of New Guinea, which was an unclouded view of the giant peaks of Mount Owen Stanley. Shortly afterwards they came in sight of Port Moresby, and through the glass she viewed the Mission compound where flags were flying, and was greatly pleased with the attractiveness of the place, the romantic native villages built in the water, and the Mission buildings on the hill behind. Then she saw a boat come from shore and sundry white helmets waving welcome. Two of the Society's missionaries with their assistants and a boat's crew had come to welcome the married pair. They sprang on board

and gave them hearty greetings. Then Chalmers and his wife got into the boat and rowed across the lagoon. As they neared the beach troops of people came to meet them, the men belonging to the Mission in light suits, the women in pretty print dresses, and the natives from the villages—men with a piece of string round the waist, women with grass petticoats, and children quite naked, all noisy, excited, and cheerful, and evidently delighted to see Tamate and his wife.

The two missionaries spent a month or so in visiting the stations along the coast in the direction of East Cape, and then sailed to Toaripi, which Chalmers was anxious to reach before the annual gatherings of the natives at New Year. He had formed a high opinion of the quality of the people of Elema, and therefore determined to make Motumotu his headquarters and to work all the district from that centre.

The voyage was made in a whale-boat as usual, and Mrs. Chalmers has put on

record a vivid description of her experiences. It was a long and tedious voyage. They arrived at three in the morning and she was too ill to walk to the house ; so her husband sent for some means of transport. As it was impossible to land on the beach owing to the heavy seas and the surf, the boat entered the river to enable the party to land on the river bank. But Mrs. Chalmers was utterly worn out, having had little rest or food. The men, however, came at Chalmers's request with a kind of rough sofa from the teacher's house and a pillow and some mats on it. Mrs. Chalmers was laid upon this and six men carried her shoulder high, others leading the way with torches. She asked them to put her down at the fence, but they insisted on lifting her over and on to the verandah, and so into the building. There was no furniture in the house and no bed, and there were no doors or windows, and all the stores—in cases—were piled up in one corner of the room. But the teacher's wife came to

Mrs. Chalmers's help, got a mattress spread on the floor and rigged up a comfortable bed with a mosquito net around it, and hung native mats in the open doorways to serve as doors. Then Tamate boiled some water and they had a supper of milk and cocoa, biscuits, and marmalade. It seemed all very queer! The home was about fifty yards from the shore, and the noise of the breakers was loud and continuous.

Mrs. Chalmers described the house as made of rough planks with a high thatched roof quite open to the top, and with a ten-foot verandah all round shaded with long and deep eaves. There was one large apartment partitioned off into three separate rooms. The 'living room' was 21 ft. by 18 ft. Some of the native teachers assisted in making a table and other items of furniture. Tamate thought it a delightful place, but Mrs. Chalmers was more critical. The walls were of roughly-sawn planks which overlapped each other but

left ledges and spaces innumerable for every creeping thing. All night the house was lively with rats and mice, lizards and cockroaches. But Mrs. Chalmers did not mind the lizards ; they were tame and made a cheery chirp, and above all they were useful in hunting and getting rid of spiders, tarantulas, beetles, and other small deer. Ants and mosquitoes abounded, ' And they like me very much,' says Mrs. Chalmers with feeling. She suffered greatly, and required often to take refuge in the mosquito net. She made fires too, both on the verandah and on the floors to scare the insects away ; the result was that her eyes were painful with the smoke ; but it was a choice of two evils, and she preferred the smoke to the mosquitoes. The mats and the floors, she said, were covered with moving life, and all night long the bats flew about the house and made her reluctant to move.

Of the natives there were about three thousand living around, wild-looking and

very powerful men, some very handsome, all fond of dress and ornament, and fond of showing off their finery. Although she was somewhat nervous in their company at first she gradually gained confidence ; and she quite agreed with what her husband said of her in fun that she would rather face a horde of wild savages than a swarm of mosquitoes. She records that every afternoon about 5 P.M. some of the ' swells ' would strut up and down before the house and show themselves off, looking very fine in their great mops of hair and their beautiful headdresses, some having plumes a yard long made of tiny white feathers, and all decorated with shells, and with leaves and flowers tucked into their belts and armlets. Some were beautifully painted in various designs and colours, like fine net-work ; others were hurriedly smeared with paint ; all had their bodies greased and polished to perfection.

It will be seen that the conditions of life to which Mrs. Chalmers had come were very

unconventional, and very different from anything she had been accustomed to, and such as to require a great deal of patience, self-denial, and heroism. More especially was this the case when, as so often happened, her husband had, in the prosecution of his work, to go off on trips lasting from a few days to six or seven weeks, and to leave her alone in the midst of her wild surroundings. It must be remembered also that Chalmers and his wife were the only Europeans within a distance of 170 miles. But happily Mrs. Chalmers was a woman of remarkable courage and devotion to duty and of high Christian principle. When first her husband had to leave her she had only a widow of one of the native teachers residing with her, and the teachers' houses were a good way off. A score or two of big natives gathered round the house. Tamate had told her they would not enter the house when he was away, nor did they offer to do so. Summoning up courage she went out and sat among them, shook hands

with them and made herself agreeable specially, and they were quite pleased and allowed her to examine their precious armlets and necklets. One brought fish and another cocoa-nuts, and she gave them tobacco in exchange. She was rather shocked at their scanty clothing, and disappointed at the coarse features of the women ; and she remarked in a letter that she had never seen one bonnie girl since she had come to New Guinea. She found the life at Motumotu very different even from that at Port Moresby. One night she was so much disturbed by the incessant and monotonous beating of a native drum that she could get no sleep ; she knew it meant some feasting going on in a near village, and feared lest there should be some disturbance. Before the dawn she thought she heard the steps of a man outside the house, and looking out in the darkness, saw a mop of hair above the verandah. She called out to the man to go away, but later she heard him knocking at one of the

doors. Mrs. Chalmers and her servant were terrified, and convinced that the man knew they were alone and meant to kill them ; but as no harm was done, they began to suspect that it was only one of the villagers who had come to make sure that they were safe !

Mrs. Chalmers was eager to help in her husband's work as far as she could. So as soon as a rough shed could be got to serve as a school she began to assist in teaching the boys to read and do sums. She was amused at her husband's unconventional ways of collecting people together for a service. If he saw a crowd hanging about the house platforms in a village he would ' make a row ' as she says, shout and gesticulate to attract their attention till their curiosity was aroused and they came. ' It is impossible to feel dull where Tamate is,' she writes ; ' the natives appreciate fun, and if you heard our hearty laughs you would think we were jolly indeed.'

Unfortunately, however, Mrs. Chalmers

was having a hard struggle to fight against fever. New Guinea villages were closely built and insanitary, and the people had the very unhygienic habit of burying their dead quite close to the houses. Chalmers's house was built only about fifty yards from the beach so as to get the sea breezes, and he planted around it 300 young cocoanut trees, so that as they grew up they might afford a pleasing shade and something green and refreshing to look at in contrast to the sand. In spite, however, of being constantly watched and doctored by her husband, Mrs. Chalmers grew gradually worse in health, and a visit to Port Moresby became absolutely necessary. Again the tedious voyage had to be made in the whale-boat, and it turned out to be one of the worst voyages Chalmers ever made. The first morning they were nearly capsized and shipped a big sea ; everything was drenched and most of their provisions spoiled. Then Mrs. Chalmers was wrapped in a blanket to rest till sundown ; the sea

was rough and there was a heavy swell. Arriving off Maivo on the first stage of their journey they were warned not to land as the surf looked dreadful all along the beach. Two 'splendid fellows' swam out to the boat, and although they warned him that it was unsafe to attempt landing, Chalmers, fearing it was going to be a stormy night, determined to risk it, and with the additional help of the two men to row they made the effort. Chalmers warned his wife that the boat might be upset and, if so, she was not to cling to it but to let herself go and the men would look after her. So they faced the danger, the men being greatly excited; and they passed the first, second, and third lines of surf successfully, but came to grief over the fourth and were nearly swamped. Dozens of ready natives, however, rushed into the water up to their necks and carried them triumphantly ashore, 'very wet but very thankful.' And soon they got hot tea to comfort them. On the next stage

of the voyage the sun was so hot that Mrs. Chalmers had sunstroke and fever. To get back to Port Moresby, however, was like being again in civilisation ; they found there many comforts and ' plenty to eat.'

In June, when Mrs. Chalmers's health was restored, they returned to Motumotu. Here Chalmers learned that Mount Owen Stanley, which he had always cherished the ambition of being first to climb, had been ascended by Sir William McGregor ; it was disappointing to him, but he took his defeat with good-humour and without jealousy.

Chalmers's intention now was, while retaining his headquarters at Motumotu, to extend his work for fifty miles further along the coast with the help of native teachers. He hoped that his wife, ' Tamate Vaine ' as the natives called her, would be now able to stand the trying climate. The house also had been improved and was more comfortable, thanks chiefly to his wife's exertions. It had got a coat of whitewash,

the posts were painted blue and sundry pictures adorned the walls. Ugly pine boxes had been transformed into splendid seats. Marvellous were the changes a lady could make on a house ! said Chalmers ; and, writing to a friend, he said, ‘ Our next move is to have it enlarged by two more rooms, so that if angels—or non-angels—come along they may find a place to stretch themselves.’

By this time also a decent school-house had been built, and classes were taught in the following languages : English, Suan, Motuan, Maiva, and Toaripi. The number of different dialects spoken was a great difficulty. ‘ It is a school for the descendants of Babel,’ said Chalmers. ‘ I feel nearly confident that unfortunate Tower must have been built near here—somewhere in New Guinea at all events.’ Chalmers’s great difficulty with the village schools was the irregular attendance of the children. They saw no advantage in being taught ; it was only by making the pro-

ceedings lively and enjoyable that they could be got to come at all. Only a few of the teachers liked school work; the continual drudgery of teaching the A B C was uncongenial to them; and, said Chalmers, 'I confess it is heavy, dreich work at times, especially on hot days.' He taught a little English, and he found that the youngsters liked it and laughed heartily at their own mistakes. Chalmers set himself also to prepare a short Scripture Catechism for the use of the young.

Mrs. Chalmers gives a description of a Sacrament service held at Toaripi. As yet there were no church members there, but with some new teachers who had arrived and teachers and converts from other stations there was a goodly number of communicants. The solemn service took place in circumstances very different from Communion services at home. The bright tropical sun shining outside; on one side the dazzling sea breaking in heavy waves up to the very steps of the church,

on the other a stretch of sandy beach, and some native houses looking like haystacks on high posts. Cocoanut and palm trees around, with glimpses between their stems of houses and the wide river; dogs, and pigs also, running about the ground. Inside the church a table covered with a white cloth and on it the elements of the Sacred Supper, consisting in this case of cocoanut milk in glasses and bread on plates. Tamate presides at the table, with a teacher on either hand. On the floor by the side of Mrs. Chalmers's chair sit the native members, the teachers and their wives, and in front are gathered the on-lookers, a group of keenly-interested natives, many of them gorgeously painted and decorated with feathers; other dark faces peering in curiously at the six doors. What a vivid picture this gives us of the strange scene; and one wonders what those dark-skinned savage spectators thought of it all.

The church of which Mrs. Chalmers

speaks had been built by the natives, the walls of nipa palm spines, the thatched roof of palm leaves, and the floor of bark ; there were two doorways on each side and one at each end, and plenty of square openings for windows.

CHAPTER VII

ALARMS AND EXCURSIONS

‘ Evil the world is ; life a long battle,
Wrestle with anguish and warfare with sin,
Proving the heart of us, trying our mettle
By trouble without us and terrors within.
And yet 'tis worth living to-day and to-morrow
The life which God lived in the wealth of His love,
Life He made perfect in patience of sorrow,
God-life on Earth like the God-life above.’

LIFE at Toaripi had its alarms. Time and again the silence of the night would be broken by weird and blood-curdling sounds; and Tamate would start up and say to his wife, ‘ That is the death wail ! ’ and whether it was death through strife or through sickness the eerie effect was the same. There was much sickness unfortunately, and the Mission lost three teachers in less than six weeks. Whenever they became ill they lost all hope of recovery. ‘ We shall die like the others,’ they would say,

and would not take medicine unless under compulsion. There were also some fights between natives, generally with serious results, and some occurring unpleasantly near the Mission premises ; but the chiefs, now more under Chalmers's influence, were doing their best to discourage such encounters.

Mrs. Chalmers accompanied her husband in a boat on a second visit to Moveave. The sail up stream was through beautifully wooded but swampy banks, and crocodiles were abundant ; there were also many and brilliant parrots and wonderful insects. Then followed a tramp of two miles through the bush, the path being a narrow and winding one shaded by tall grass and ferns, just sufficient to allow the party to walk in single file, and at places it was knee deep in mud, at other spots spanned by rustic native bridges very shaky and slippery to cross. When they rested they found it almost intolerably hot in the bush ; but a kind chief sent a boy up a tree to get

fresh cocoa-nuts, and the cool milk was refreshing. When Chalmers reached Moveave he found the old chief had died, and had been buried in accordance with custom in front of the house in an enclosure 9 feet square, and inside this the whole family, widow, children, and grand-children were living, sleeping, cooking, and eating. The widow looked wretched and dirty, and was daubed with clay ; and it was forbidden to her to wash during her three months' mourning.

Mrs. Chalmers, although not feeling able for much exertion, was persuaded to climb up to and enter a large new *dubu* which had been recently erected here. Its floor was 22 feet above the ground, and it could only be approached by a crazy native ladder made of tree stems tied to slender poles. It was no easy job to ascend, but when once she was inside she felt repaid for her trouble, the coolness and the shade were such a refreshing relief. But the getting down was alarming, as a sudden misunderstanding

between some of the teachers and the natives produced an immediate angry outbreak and a great display of clubs and bows and arrows. Happily Mrs. Chalmers thought at first that it was only a theatrical display for her entertainment ; by the time she realised the seriousness of it the real danger was over, for Tamate had interposed, soothed the angry passions, and made peace. But she was convinced it was a very narrow escape from a massacre.

In October 1889 Chalmers was called to Port Moresby to attend a committee meeting, and Mrs. Chalmers accompanied him. There he met the Governor, Sir William McGregor, who asked Chalmers to accompany him on an expedition he was intending to make to the Fly River, and Chalmers readily agreed, as he wished to visit the mission stations in the district, and also examine into the prospects of establishing new stations. Unfortunately on returning to Toaripi Mrs. Chalmers had a bad attack of fever.

On 21st January 1890 the *Merrie England* with Sir William McGregor on board arrived at Toaripi, and in a few hours Chalmers had to sail. He was to be away for nine weeks and Mrs. Chalmers felt his absence terribly. Her letters and journal show what her experiences and her feelings were during these lonely weeks. At one time we read that it was a terrific storm during the night, driving away all possibility of sleep; thunder pealing and lightning flashing such as she had never before experienced; the alarmed natives adding to the din by their shouting and the weird blowing of shells, the rain pouring into the house and drenching everything. 'I did wish my husband was at home,' she says pathetically. Another day it is trouble with the girls who are doing the washing, or she is busy distributing soup to the sick, or again patiently teaching hymn tunes to the boys, or attending the Motuan service, and in the intervals dosing herself with quinine. Another night

pandemonium suddenly broke loose around her. She slipped on her dressing-gown and rushed out to see what was happening. She saw about fifty young fellows behind the fence and another crowd coming past the church carrying torches and dancing and yelling like maniacs. Boldly she marched up to the young fellows 'scolding right and left,' and turned them off the Mission property. Then she went to meet the advancing host who really looked menacing and formidable, but being joined by about twenty elder men from the village, she felt more confidence to tackle them, and although quaking inwardly she boldly harangued them in a mixture of English, Motuan, and Toaripi with violent gesticulations, telling them they were behaving disgracefully, and commanding them to go home and leave her in peace. She laughed afterwards at the ridiculous figure she knew she was cutting, but it was serious enough at the time. One old fellow patted her on the shoulder in a paternal fashion,

and told her to go home and sleep and she would be disturbed no more ; and so all ended peacefully.

Chalmers's trip up the Fly River on this occasion was only a preliminary visit with a view to making a report to his Directors. He found the country bordering the river low and swampy, and feared it would be a fever-breeding district.

By the time the summer of 1890 came it was evident that Mrs. Chalmers imperatively required rest and change, for the fever had greatly undermined her strength. Chalmers himself was anxious to visit the mission stations in Samoa and Rarotonga to rekindle missionary zeal and activity there, for the work in New Guinea depended much on the help of native teachers trained in these islands. He also hoped to raise enough money in the colonies to get a steam launch for his future work on the Fly River.

So Chalmers and his wife set out on a visit to both these groups of islands, and

in the first instance went to Brisbane. There Chalmers addressed meetings, was invited to Government House, and met Lord Charles Scott, Admiral of the Australian Station. In September he and his wife sailed from Sydney to Samoa which he now saw again for the first time after twenty-four years.

His passage was a very rough one, but it had one great compensation ; it was on this voyage that he had his first and memorable meeting with Robert Louis Stevenson, his famous compatriot. ' Louis Stevenson and his wife were on board,' he wrote, ' and we enjoyed the trip well. They have bought 400 acres of land behind Apia and are going to squat. George Brown of the Wesleyan New Guinea Mission with his wife were also with us, and you may be sure the smoking-room, the best part of the ship, was well patronised.'

In September he had a meeting ' of all the clans ' at Apia ; (he called it a ' May meeting ') ; there was a large gathering ;

three consuls were present, and the chief speakers were Tamate and King Malietoa. On the following evening (18th Sept. 1890) Chalmers gave a lecture to the white population on his experiences in New Guinea ; there was a crowded house, and the chair was taken by Robert Louis Stevenson.

Stevenson on this occasion said, ‘ There are some men who never need introducing, and Tamate is one of these. It has been my good fortune to steal a march upon my fellow-townsmen, and to anticipate many of you in the privilege of acquaintance with Mr. Chalmers, for I travelled with him from Sydney here. This intimate intercourse has resulted in my having the highest admiration for Mr. Chalmers ; and I am sure that all present will not only enjoy listening to his narrative but will also very heartily wish him God-speed in all his future endeavours as a pioneer of civilisation and love. I believe we shall all be stimulated to greater courage in taking up

the cross that all heroic souls have taken—the cross of light and progress.’

The meeting of two such famous compatriots as the great novelist and the great missionary is one that stirs the imagination. We know how highly they appreciated each other, and no one can wonder at the sudden attachment which sprung up between them, for surely they were kindred natures, and in spite of some apparent surface differences, had much in common. Both were fervent Scots, both born adventurers, and both had faced death and danger in many ways and on many occasions. The slender, delicate, fastidious, and cultured Robert Louis may have presented a great contrast to the stalwart and bronzed and somewhat Bohemian missionary; but both were sincere and unconventional, and they were alike in their view of the fundamental seriousness of life and the value of the human soul, and in their reverence for true Christianity and their love for their fellow creatures. And both

were fond of good stories and had unusual experiences from which to draw.

Stevenson with his keen insight into human nature and his experience of native character was an observant and shrewd but generous critic of missionary work in the South Seas. He admired many missionaries, sympathised with their work, and even lent at one time a helping hand to it himself. 'I had conceived a great prejudice against missions in the South Seas,' he confesses, 'and had no sooner come there than that prejudice was at first reduced and then at last annihilated. Those who deblaterate against missions have only one thing to do—to come and see them on the spot. They will see a great deal of good done; they will see a race being forwarded in many different directions; and I believe, if they be honest persons, they will cease to complain of mission work and its effects.'

What Chalmers and his wife thought of Stevenson appears from this letter:—

‘ We spent some time in Sydney and then went off to the islands. We had as fellow-passengers Mr. and Mrs. Louis Stevenson on their way back to Samoa. We had a very rough passage, but the smoking-room was well patronised, and we spent many happy hours in it with our new friends. Dr. and Mrs. Brown of New Britain were also with us. Oh the story-telling of that trip ! Did that smoking-room on any other trip hear so many yarns ? Brown surpassed us all, and the gentle novelist did well. His best stories were personal. My dear wife often said, “ How gentle and lovable he is ! Just one to nurse ! ” He was in very bad health, and cared for by his clever wife. We became much attached to one another, and hoped to meet in Rarotonga and afterwards in New Guinea ; but we never met again after Samoa.’

What Stevenson thought of Chalmers we also know, both from his own letters and from the *Life* by Mr. Graham Balfour. R. L. S. described Chalmers as ‘ a big, stout,

wildish-looking man ; iron grey, with big, bold, black eyes, and a deep, straight furrow down each cheek : *ætat* 40 to 50.' We know that Stevenson cherished for Chalmers a kind of hero-worship—an admiration probably greater than he felt for any man of modern times except General Gordon. Writing to his mother he said, ' He is a man nobody can see and not love. Did I tell you I took the chair at his missionary lecture by his own choice ? I was proud to be at his side even for so long. He has plenty of faults like the rest of us, but he 's as big as a church ! '

Writing to Chalmers, expressing his disappointment at not being able to meet him again as he had hoped, Stevenson said :—

' My dear Tamate, I wish I could tell you how pleased I was to get your note. I shall never cease to rejoice I had the good fortune to meet you ; and whatever you are good enough to think of me, be sure it is returned with interest. I am a man now past 40, Scotch at that, and not used to

big expressions in friendship ; used on the other hand to be very much ashamed of them. Now when I break my word to you I may say so much. I count it a privilege and a benefit to have met you ; I count it loss not to meet with you again. But, O Tamate, if I had met you when I was a boy and a bachelor, how different my life would have been ! ’

In another epistle he tells how he had received from a lady in England a portrait of Tamate, which he says ‘ is on my chimney-shelf as large as life.’

Other interesting extracts show his high regard for his missionary friend :—

‘ What ill fortune we had not to meet ! I am sure I missed you at last by a narrow margin. I wish I could go with this letter, but it is no good talking. All I can say is my most sincere affection goes ; and when you have done your day’s duty may we both live to meet and have a crack in the evening. I wish there were more like you. You are the man for my complaint ; you

do me good. I wonder if I am of any use ? None, I fear, or so little. Well, you have been of use to me. . . . I wish you from my heart good strength, good spirits, a good courage, and a blessing on your endeavours. Go on, my dear man, in God's name ; the right man in the right place ; and may you see the reward of your success.'

CHAPTER VIII

AT RAROTONGA AND TOARIPI

'The world sits at the feet of Christ
Unknowing, blind, and unconsolated ;
It yet shall touch His garment's fold,
And feel the heavenly alchemist
Transform its very dust to gold.'

CHALMERS greatly enjoyed his visit to Samoa, and took away with him a favourable impression of the progress of the native Church there. His presence and his addresses helped to stir up more enthusiasm for mission work in New Guinea, and he secured promises of further help from native teachers.

Leaving Samoa on 30th September 1890 he went by steamer to Rarotonga. It was a place endeared to him by happy memories of his early wedded life and his first missionary experiences, and also because during the years that had elapsed since

then so many native teachers from the island had co-operated with him in mission work in New Guinea. And further the beauty of the island always attracted him. He thought it the loveliest in the South Pacific ; and he even expressed the wish that in the unlikely event of his ever ' retiring ' from active work he might spend his old age in that perfect climate. He thought it would have suited Stevenson better than Samoa. He found the native services well attended ; he preached and baptized, administered the Sacrament, visited various stations, and also helped to bury the dead, for a young native Pastor had just died. He was glad to meet several who, when he left the island before, were leading wild and godless lives, but now were active and sincere members of the Church.

Chalmers's own descriptions are brief and reticent, but from his wife's letters we can better imagine what scenes took place when Chalmers revisited Rarotonga. The

Consul boarded the steamer to welcome them ; great crowds gathered on the beach ; from every house people came out ; many old people with tears running down their faces insisted on embracing Chalmers and his wife. Tamate's name was a household word ; the people seemed to worship him ; they spoke of him as if there never had been or could be anybody like him. And to their great delight Chalmers's memory was so wonderful that he remembered all their names and could inquire after their families.

One piece of sad news they heard, that the Queen's adopted son was dead and to be buried next day. Chalmers went to the royal residence—a handsome two-storey house, with verandah, and furnished in European style, with an avenue of trees in front. As the missionary approached the Queen came out attended by her women, put her arms round Tamate and kissed him, then keeping her hand on his shoulder examined his face keenly and

spoke a few words. Then she embraced Mrs. Chalmers, introduced her own husband, and led them indoors into a nice large drawing-room. Lamps were brought in and Tamate was put in an armchair with the Prince Consort beside him. The room filled quickly with people. One poor old lady turned eighty forced her way through sobbing and crying and threw herself at Tamate's feet, clasping his legs. Tamate's heart was too full for words.

Tamate summed up his impressions in a serious letter to a home friend. He was terribly saddened to find a people so free, kind, and truly attractive rapidly dying out. While he blamed strong drink as one cause he was aware that it was not the only cause. He thought that the introduction of foreign customs had gone too far. He maintained that they were a people easily led and with a thoroughly religious nature ; but their greatest failing was drink ; and the chiefs, though anxious to stop the

liquor traffic, were unable to contend against the unscrupulous whites.

Chalmers returned by way of Auckland and Melbourne where he addressed numerous meetings, and reached Port Moresby again in May 1891. There he was detained until the arrival of the *John Williams* which was bringing a contingent of native pastors and their wives from Rarotonga, Samoa, and Niue. Chalmers spent a week with the new arrivals, had a 'good refreshing time' with them, and was delighted to find them so full of earnestness and enthusiasm. Then followed a trip to Kerepunu to attend the annual Committee meeting at which it was decided that Chalmers should go to Cooktown and arrange for a vessel to visit the eastern stations during the absence of the *Harrier*, which was at Sydney undergoing repair. After these expeditions he returned to Toaripi on 6th July. He had a trying experience at the landing, which Mrs. Chalmers has described in her diary.

There was a heavy sea on the voyage, the ship rolled and the passengers had to hold on continually to prevent themselves being pitched overboard, and Mrs. Chalmers was bruised and sore with the continual bumping. They came in sight of the Mission station about sunset, and it looked 'anything but inviting' as a place of residence. They were very anxious to get ashore, however, but the seas were so tremendous that it was impossible. Nor could any boat reach them from the shore because of the surf. To avoid shipwreck they had to keep well out, and they cast anchor in such poor anchorage as they could find. A terrible night of discomfort followed, the ship swung and rolled, the seas continually breaking over one side or other. Mrs. Chalmers was firmly lashed to a seat which was bolted to the companion way, and she rolled with every movement of the ship. 'I never passed such a night,' she records. And there, exactly opposite, she saw at every lurch of the boat the lantern beam-

ing on the Mission flagstaff—that showed a place of refuge so near and yet so unattainable. Of course no one on board could sleep ; and Chalmers and his missionary colleague Mr. Savage could neither stand on deck nor lie in their berths below. Next morning (Sunday) two boats left the river before daybreak, and with great difficulty managed to come out and alongside. The rise and fall of the ship with the waves rendered it very dangerous to attempt to get into a boat, but anxiety to land prevailed over fear of danger and Mrs. Chalmers called out to the students in the boat to stand ready to catch her and she would jump as the boat rose. She landed safely though feeling dizzy and shaken ; and they only shipped one sea crossing the bar. Sore with tossing about and sick with hunger, Mrs. Chalmers reached the shore and found it covered with a great crowd ; teachers, and house boys, natives old and young, male and female, had all turned out to welcome back the Mission

lady whom many of them had despaired of ever seeing again.

No sooner was Mrs. Chalmers settled in her home than her husband was called away again. At Port Moresby he learned the sad news of the deaths of several of his newly-installed native teachers. From there he proceeded to Cooktown and endured such bad weather all the way that some spars and sails were carried away, and the ship had to anchor near 'Three Islands' to repair damages. The following night was wet and blowy and the sea high, and Chalmers was just getting to sleep when there was a sudden startling bump on the rocks, a horrible grating sound, and the ship stuck fast. Their position was both unsafe and uncomfortable, they threw ballast overboard, kept signals of distress flying, and fired rockets and burned blue lights, but were not seen. The pumps were kept going as long as possible, but by Sunday morning they were useless, the ship was leaning on its side and the sea

flowing in and out ; masts and rigging were cut away to prevent the ship capsizing ; and then, as all felt they were in a desperate condition, the whale-boat was provisioned and launched and put under charge of the second mate and passengers and crew transferred. They were just on the point of leaving when Chalmers saw a sailor emerge from the hold. ' Hallo ! What are you up to ? ' he cried. ' Looking for poor old Tom, the cat, sir,' he yelled ; ' we must save him if we can ' ; and first the cat was rescued and then the pet cockatoo. There were eleven souls on board the whale-boat, and it was really overweighted with provisions and other effects, and baling had to be constantly resorted to. However, the mate did splendidly and they landed safely on the lee side of ' Three Islands ' and took possession of a *beche-de-mer* station and waited for some passing ship. Again they burned lights and fired rockets, but it was not till next morning that they were rescued by the *Governor Cairns*, which

took them all on board, supplied them with food, and conveyed them to Cooktown. This was Chalmers's fourth experience of shipwreck.

Some foolish gossiping newspapers reported that when the *Harrier* struck the rock Chalmers called all hands to prayer. Chalmers said this was utterly false ; he believed in prayer as much as any man—he had good reason to believe in it—but there was a time to pray and a time to work, and at that time everybody on board was engaged getting sail in or heaving on the hawser ; and to hold a prayer meeting at such a time would have been an act of stupidity or fear.

After the wreck of the *Harrier* Chalmers, by permission of the Queensland Government, got the loan of the schooner *Governor Cairns* to take him back to Toaripi where he found all well. During his absence arrangements had been made for building houses for new teachers at Orokelo, Vailala, and Kerema. The regular

routine of mission work at Toaripi was as follows :—

- 6 A.M. Bell rings for morning prayer.
- 6.30–8. Bible Class.
- 9–11 (or 12). Boys' Class.
- 3–5 P.M. Men and Boys for arithmetic and writing.
- Women for reading and sewing.
- 5.30. Evening prayers.
- 7. Evening service in the house.

ON SUNDAYS

- 6 A.M. Morning prayers.
- 6.30. Services in villages.
- 9. Students and boys assemble in class-room and after prayer march to church.
- 11. Service in class-room in Motuan.
(Quarter of an hour given to Catechism study.)
- 3.30 P.M. Assemble in class-room and after prayer march to service in village.
- 5.30. Prayer meeting.

Toaripi consisted of two villages, Eastern and Western, each having a native teacher. In such new stations queer experiences

often happened. Some of the natives of the Eastern village threatened the teacher because he claimed certain ground and cocoa-nuts for the Mission. His claim was founded on the fact that his predecessor Tauraki (who had been murdered) had bought them for the Mission. Chalmers took the matter in hand, and after finishing his classes took his cane and, ordering some lads to accompany him, went with the teacher to the disputed ground and found a *tapu* erected. A crowd gathered, but Chalmers ordered the boundaries to be cleared and, giving a tomahawk to a youth, ordered him to cut down the *tapu*. Then he marked the trees in dispute as belonging to the Mission; no one dared to interfere, and Chalmers finished by addressing some pointed words to the people. And so what might have been a tragic dispute ended safely.

Then he proceeded to the Western village where the matter to be inquired into was the theft of a dress from a student's

wife. The accusation roused a good deal of ill-feeling, but he could not let thieving pass. While waiting for evidence to be brought forward he saw a wicked-looking fellow with a tomahawk coming from a house close by. The fellow sat down behind Chalmers, but the latter turned round and ordered him to move to the front, which he did. He had also to disarm a youth of his bow and arrows for a time, but tact and patience got Chalmers safely out of the midst of what looked a troublesome crowd. 'Don't expect too much!' said Chalmers, writing home about his work; 'forced work is unhealthy and manufactured converts do not last long. Let the work grow with our lives, and in God's good time there will be a temple worthy of His praise.'

Mr. J. E. Liddiard, who visited Chalmers at Toaripi in September 1891, said that one night there was such a disturbance in the village that Chalmers got up and went out to see what was the matter and he

accompanied him. Many wild natives were encountered rushing past in the darkness carrying weapons and shouting defiance. Chalmers and his companion followed them to the large *dubu*, a club house which had been recently erected, and found that the dispute had arisen between one party who wished to have a great dance in the *dubu* and another party who objected on account of the recent death of a native. The formal opening of this *dubu* had been put off at Tamate's request, for he did not wish to see it opened until he had obtained an assurance that no sacrifice of life would take place on the occasion. It had always been the custom to consecrate such places with human sacrifices and other horrible orgies. Chalmers happily on this occasion succeeded in making peace between the rival parties; then he and Liddiard climbed up the rough ladder to the platform in front of the *dubu*. The only lights in the interior of this great hall were fires which

were burning on clay hearths, and it was a weird spectacle which was presented by the armed and decorated warriors as the flickering firelight fell upon their figures. The missionaries were well received. Chalmers talked kindly and wisely to the people and at the close offered prayer, and all the assembly of dusky warriors reverently bowed their heads and joined in the closing 'Amen.'

Mr. Liddiard counted it a great privilege to have seen Chalmers at work in his New Guinea Mission, and to have witnessed the changes wrought by the Gospel among the savages. In his opinion Tamate was an ideal missionary, bright and cheery, brave and fearless, brisk and energetic in movement, intensely in earnest, tender yet firm, bold as a lion and as gentle as a woman, a real friend to the natives, and untiring in his endeavours to do them good.

In the autumn of this year Chalmers went a trip on board the *Merrie England* for the purpose of choosing a new site for

his future work, and Mrs. Chalmers was left for another period alone. Unfortunately she became very ill. Lying helpless on her couch one day she was surprised to see Lahari, the great warrior-chief of Motumotu, enter ; he stroked her hair and forehead and uttered words of sympathy, and then broke into abuse of Tamate, calling him a ' bad husband ' to leave his wife alone in her sickness with no one to cook her ' Beritani ' food for her. And when Chalmers came home Lahari got hold of him and told him in plain terms what he thought of his conduct. Tamate was very fond of this fine-looking chief who attended the services regularly and never let a day pass without a visit to the missionary. But now Tamate himself caught fever, was seriously ill for a time, and became so weak that he had to be carried to and from the boat.

Of personal illness or danger, however, Chalmers made very little ; and in his letters to his old fellow students he wrote

in a cheery fashion ; it was ' grand work ' he was engaged in, he said, now teaching or preaching and again making roads or bridges or houses, or giving medicine to the sick ; visiting stations on foot or on horseback or in a boat ; and exploring new territory and selecting places for new stations. And for work like this he wanted ' *don't care* ' men ; men who could put up with anything and not grumble ; ready to take all risks, not knowing whether they might be met with spear and club or with friendliness and food. The people at Toaripi were ' a wild lot ' he confessed, and he had always to be on his guard. One day when he was holding a service one youth was very troublesome especially at prayer time. At the close Chalmers kept hold of the lad to speak to him by himself when the others had gone. But evidently this action was misunderstood or resented, for a crowd of excited men armed with clubs and bows and arrows gathered quickly round the church, their leader

brandishing a huge wooden broadsword. Chalmers sprang to the door in time to meet the leader on the steps and wrenched the broadsword from his grasp, and several of the men betook themselves helter-skelter into the bush. Chalmers was advised to go home quietly by a back way through the bush ; but he was convinced that would never do, so he marched with his boys accompanying him boldly through the village carrying his captured broadsword, greatly to the amusement of the onlookers.

At the close of the year Chalmers, this time accompanied by his wife, made a short visit to Port Moresby. On their return in January they had another exciting adventure in the surf. For nearly an hour they struggled with the waves in their attempt to land ; and Mrs. Chalmers confessed that she got as excited as the men and shouted when the great rollers came thick and fast. Eventually they got to land with the assistance of a power-

ful swimmer who had a local reputation as a great 'sorcerer,' who carried a half cocoanut shell filled with oil in each hand—a trick which greatly amused and interested Chalmers. The natives were triumphant because they thought their 'sorcerer' had more power over the waves than Tamate.

It was beginning to be evident that Mrs. Chalmers's health could not stand the trying climate and the conditions of life in New Guinea much longer without a complete rest and change. So in March 1892 she left for England, after a pathetic parting with her husband at Thursday Island. Meanwhile Chalmers had a new and long expedition on hand, for he had been asked by the Directors to undertake the superintendence of the Western Division of the Mission, which meant an exploration of the Fly River District and making the acquaintance of new tribes with the object of selecting sites for mission stations.

CHAPTER IX

WORK AT FLY RIVER AND VISIT HOME

‘Man is the shuttle to whose winding quest
And passage through these looms
God ordered motion, but ordained no rest.’

THE Fly River is one of the great rivers of the world. It has not yet been fully explored, but is known to be at least six hundred miles in length and of magnificent volume. Its navigation, however, is difficult, and the banks are, as a rule, lined with dense forests seldom penetrated by white men except by a few scientists on the search after orchids, rare insects, and birds, or by some daring settler who sets up a bungalow, clears a space of ground, and grows rubber or some other paying produce, and takes the risk of living amid hostile natives against whose murderous instincts he has to keep perpetual vigilance. It was

Chalmers's hope to navigate this river, visit the inland tribes, and establish new mission stations among them. As the central base of his mission work he fixed upon Saguane in Kiwai Island in the Fly River Delta. Unfortunately it was a low and swampy place, and had eventually to be abandoned owing to the encroachment of the water. Having resolved to place at Saguane a native teacher named Maru and his wife, Chalmers accompanied them to that place in March 1892.

Then followed one of the strangest and most mystical experiences in Chalmers's life. He had anchored his boat in the creek, and before going ashore he meditated on what course he should follow. It was an utterly unknown territory he was about to enter, and he knew not whether he would meet with friendliness, indifference, or hostility. His recent parting from his wife had doubtless caused him depression of spirit, for he records in language very unusual for him 'I was very cast

down.' He had recourse to prayer for guidance ; then leaving Maru in the boat he landed and walked along the beach alone. Suddenly as if in answer to his prayer he seemed to hear a voice speaking to him and saying, ' This is the way, walk ye in it.' Not yet thoroughly convinced, however, he sat down on a log and said in prayer, ' If Thine, O Lord, is the voice, teach me to hear and act ' ; and the response that came was ' Fear not ! I am with thee, neither be thou dismayed ' ; and he thanked God and took courage.

Then proceeding inland he fixed in his own mind on a suitable site for the Mission. As it turned out he met no one that day, as all the people of the village were away attending some initiation service. He and Maru took possession of an empty house for the night ; and on the following day walking down to the beach he met the people returning in their canoes. He explained to the first man he met that he had taken the liberty of occupying the house

but would pay for it, and the reply was 'Good—good.' Then the selection of the Mission site was duly confirmed, and the assistance of twelve young men obtained to erect the building. The house was not finished till the middle of May, and Chalmers busied himself in making visits to many villages in the neighbourhood.

At Iasa, a village of 200 inhabitants, he found a crowd of over 2000 people gathered for the great annual festival, which, with dances and feasting, lasted for some months. Some of the club houses in which these dances took place were of great dimensions. One at Baramura was 692 feet in length, 40 feet broad, and with a high roof. There were divisions along the sides for the different families, while a chief or headman occupied each end. For these dances all dressed very elaborately with head-dresses of feathers and with garters or anklets which had bunches of dried nuts attached to make a rattling noise.

The Directors having promised addi-

tional help, Chalmers resolved to divide the Western Branch of the Mission and have two central stations, one at Dauan and the other at Jokea. The people at these places were delighted at the prospect of having a missionary settled among them.

Chalmers looked upon his work in the Fly River District as the last and probably the greatest of the tasks he had undertaken for his Master. He knew that it involved great danger, but he did not fear, and he wrote in his diary 'God knows there will be many Gethsemanes, and it may be Calvarys; but all for Christ; and it is well.'

It was decided at a Conference held at Port Moresby that the Fly River work should be proceeded with without delay, and that for the requirements of the district a steam launch to navigate the river should be got, and also that two new missionaries should be sent to take over Chalmers's work at Motumotu and Delena.

The field which Chalmers had to super-

intend at this time was of enormous extent, and necessitated almost constant travelling between the Straits and the Gulf, and attendance at the regular Committee meetings at Port Moresby. But it was work admirably suited to his temperament so long as he was in good health. He thoroughly enjoyed visiting new territory and opening up new avenues for the Gospel. 'I dearly love,' he said, 'to be the first to preach Christ in a place,' even though it had to be through an interpreter.

In September 1892 Chalmers again visited Toaripi and baptized eight natives after they had given good testimony of their faith before their countrymen. Letters and gifts from friends at home also cheered him greatly; and in his letters he expresses his delight at receiving, and his joy in reading, books by Barrie and other popular authors.

The launch Chalmers expected arrived in January 1893, and was named the *Miro*. At first he found it of great help. When

wet and dirty with travel it was pleasant to step on board the anchored launch and have a change and rest and a comfortable meal. The majority of the villages visited were well in from the river bank, and he had to wade through mud and water and cross creeks and saplings to get to them. Sometimes the boat stuck fast in a mud-bank. At another time Chalmers was startled by a noise like an express train, and found that it was a bore rushing down the river. He thought at first it was a case of total destruction, for the bore caught them and swept the boat bodily, anchor and all, on to the bank and across it. The rudder-post was bent and cracked, and the stern-post carried away. Unfortunately he was soon convinced that the launch was not suited for the navigation of such a difficult river, and that one with more powerful engines and greater protection for the propeller would be required.

Often when visiting these villages for the first time Chalmers found that the

wives and children were all stowed away in the bush; but if he managed to get a present of a few beads conveyed to one woman all the rest would soon appear. Once when he was in difficulties the Chief of Domori (Araua by name) came to him bringing a very acceptable present of native food and saying 'Tamate, this is a *real* present, and I want no pay.' Having heard a native pray at a meeting, this same chief said, 'Tamate, by and by you teach me, I too can pray like him.' Chalmers was much struck by some of the prayers of his converts. One of them referred to Heaven as 'the place of Laughter.' Another was very insistent on saying, 'We want much tobacco and calico, and tomahawks and knives.' Perhaps, considering his circumstances, this was no worse a prayer than many of those uttered by Christians at home. Chalmers had sufficient buoyancy and fun in spite of his age to enjoy playing games at football or other sports with the lads, even though, as he records, he felt

stiff for days after. But occasionally he had trouble even with some of his teachers. He mentions specially one who neglected his own work to make money by trading, and of course he had to go. 'I may not be careful enough of Mr. Mammon,' says Chalmers, 'but some of these men are certainly too careful and forget all else.' Only once in his life, Chalmers said, did he feel acutely the pinch of poverty; he had often been without money and yet happy without it; but on that one memorable occasion he was in want of a stamp for a love-letter and could not get it!

On reaching Thursday Island in March 1894, Chalmers found a telegram awaiting him calling him back to England to take part in the centenary celebrations of the London Missionary Society. He landed at Tilbury in May, and was rejoiced to meet his wife again after a separation of two years. After a long life in the tropics Chalmers found the English winter very trying, and was twice threatened with a

serious breakdown in health. He was able, however, to do a vast amount of speaking in the cities and towns of Britain, repeating the story of his wonderful adventures to delighted audiences and kindling missionary enthusiasm wherever he went. He was the principal and the most popular speaker at the centenary celebrations, and he also addressed large audiences at the City Temple, and at the Free Assembly Hall, Edinburgh. In the latter case the chairman of the meeting was Sir William McGregor, who had been Governor of New Guinea for seven years, and who knew Chalmers and New Guinea well. He bore emphatic testimony to the value of Mr. Chalmers's work both as missionary and explorer, and declared it his opinion that there could be no finer mission-field than New Guinea, presenting as it did such a large population without any trace of literature or religion, and living practically in the Stone Age, and yet possessing good intellectual qualities.

Chalmers also visited Inveraray and received from the townsmen the highest honour they could bestow—the freedom of the Burgh. The ceremony took place in Inveraray Court House ; the casket was presented by the Provost, and Chalmers delivered an address full of genial reminiscences of his youthful days. He told his audience that he had been one of the first volunteers in Inveraray and a member of its first cricket club, and had been considered one of the best football players in the district. He was naturally proud of the high distinction conferred upon him by his fellow-townsmen ; and he concluded by telling them what had been always the animating principle of his life : ‘ He had never been able to look far ahead, but he had tried every day to do every day’s work as well as ever he could.’

CHAPTER X

LAST DAYS

‘ But all through life I see a Cross
Where Sons of God yield up their breath ;
There is no gain except by loss ;
There is no life except by death.’

WHEN Chalmers returned to New Guinea in January 1896 he entered upon the last five years of his life and work.

Since the settlement of Mr. Dauncey at Delena and Mr. Holmes at Jokea, Chalmers had been relieved of the chief responsibility for the mission work from Port Moresby to Toaripi ; but the new territory over which he was placed was still a very extensive one ; and he looked forward with interest to an extension of his operations, so as to reach the fierce head-hunters of the Aird River and complete a chain of stations along the coast. His first duty, however, was the superintendence of the mission

stations established on the numerous islands studding the Torres Straits, and this involved almost continual voyaging in schooner or whale-boat through seas which were difficult and dangerous to navigate owing to hidden rocks, strong currents, and frequent storms.

After knocking about three months in boats, playing captain, mate, and pilot, enjoying very little comfort, and often wet from morning to night, he was glad to take a rest and change of occupation ; and having fixed upon Saguane as his base, he went there with Maru, who was both carpenter and teacher, and erected a school-room and boys' house and other buildings. For a long time the number of scholars in attendance was disappointingly small ; and our veteran missionary spent months in the patient performance of the humble duties of an infant school teacher, trying to instruct his sprightly young savages in the rudiments of knowledge and finding it very uphill and irksome work. In the long run

the force of his genial personality prevailed, and the attendance increased till there were over 100 scholars. But he had to keep a vigilant eye on the natives, for their thievish propensities were very troublesome. There were also native festivals of a hideous kind which interfered seriously with the work. Such was the Kina or annual snake worship at Saguane, which in the words of Chalmers was 'indescribably filthy.' The last gathering of the kind having been marked by sickness and death, the chiefs and sorcerers attributed this to the evil influence of the Mission, and tried to prevent the children from attending the school. But the children had by this time found the school too attractive to stay away. Chalmers replied to the protests of the chiefs that the Gospel had come to stay, it would bring light and life, the filthy worship would disappear and be forgotten, and all who remembered it would be ashamed of it.

In the end of 1896 he had a spell of ten weeks' visitation of his stations, and had

some uncomfortable experiences, the worst being at Vailala, when the sea drove the ship on to the bank, the anchor being of no use. It looked as if the vessel would be a complete wreck, but a whale-boat in charge of a white trader and manned by natives came to the rescue. On this occasion the natives attributed the disaster to the fact that Chalmers had on board the ship some discarded idols, which a sorcerer had given him voluntarily because he wanted them no more. Ruminating on such experiences Chalmers wrote, 'I used to wonder what sort of place Heaven would be without sea. Now at all events I am glad ; I have had quite enough of it lately.' Much of his visitation was done on the *Niue*, a 15-ton boat which had little cargo-room and was apt to get very wet if there was any sea on. Wood and water were carried on board and 40 fathoms of chain ; native lads acted as cook and steward. When they came to a station a native teacher would come off in a canoe and get

his regular supply of clothing, calico, prints, tobacco, soap, rice, flour, and knives.

At another station the dingy would be got out and the missionary pulled ashore and the bell rung for service—this was done by striking a piece of old iron with a large spike nail—and a meeting would be held in a queerly built church, and some converts baptized, and perhaps the returning missionary would get a very welcome present of yams to help out his meal of rice. When there was no church the service would be held under a banyan tree. Some visits, involved wading for a mile or two through mud and slush. One part of the journey Chalmers dubbed ‘purgatory,’ because of the plague of mosquitoes he had to endure while waiting for the tide to enable him to cross the sandbanks.

Some islands he visited had a mere handful of people; one had a population of twenty-two, of whom seven were church members. At another place the ‘boys’ land to gather firewood and turtle eggs,

then it may be a gale springs up, the seas rise, the sails are reefed, and there is no sleep for any one that night. Or they get into shallow water and the lead is constantly kept going to avoid reefs. Sometimes when a landing is made no people are visible, the village being quite deserted. At another station there is great excitement over the opening of a new church. At Saibai, for example, a fine church was built and paid for entirely by the people themselves. It cost over £100, and at the opening service a collection of £21 was taken. On this occasion a procession was formed and Chalmers got the keys and formally opened the new church for worship, and after prayers and sermon the whole company sat down to a great feast in which forty-six cooked pigs formed the *pièce de résistance*. Here the young natives were dressed in Norfolk jackets and breeches with long white stockings, and the women in Turkey-red dresses and black hats with red ribbons. These people, it must be

remembered, were savages and inveterate skull-hunters when Chalmers first went to New Guinea. Well might he ask, ' If this is not evidence of the Gospel's power, what could be ? '

Chalmers was greatly cheered by the return of his wife to New Guinea in August 1897. Her impressions of Saguane were not very favourable. It was difficult, she said, to get accustomed to do household duties in the midst of a perspiring crowd of curious onlookers. She found the natives a much lower type than those she had known at Toaripi; the school boys of whom she took charge were a terrible ' handful,' extremely passionate and ready to fight literally with tooth and nail when anything went wrong; and the grown-up people were deceitful and lazy, unwilling to work even for good pay, and their immorality was fearful.

In February of next year Chalmers had the misfortune to fall twelve feet in a dark night when crossing a narrow bridge con-

necting the verandas of the Mission buildings. He was severely bruised, and was off duty for three weeks.

In May Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers left on the *Nine* to visit the teachers in the Straits. They were overtaken by a terrible series of gales, and compelled to take refuge at Thursday Island. The result was that first Mrs. Chalmers and afterwards her husband were seriously ill, the latter suffering from rheumatic and malarial fever. Even when he got back to Saguane he was long of throwing off his weakness, but he could become quickly active when his spirit was roused. A row suddenly sprang up in the village about a girl who left her home because she disliked the youth her parents wished her to marry. Fiendish howlings and screamings roused Chalmers, he rushed to the spot where the girl was apparently being torn in twain by the rival combatants, and by the aid of his cane and his shouts he scattered the crowd and rescued the fainting girl from their hands, and bore

her triumphantly to the safe refuge of the Mission compound. He felt quite refreshed after the scrimmage.

In September he was visited by the members of a scientific expedition under the direction of Dr. Alfred Haddon. Mr. Ray, the philologist of the party, stayed with him for a time, taught and drilled the children, and took phonograph records of native songs. When the natives heard the sound reproduced they were amazed and puzzled, but concluded that it was a ghost.

Mrs. Chalmers's health again failing, her husband accompanied her to Australia for a change, and after four weeks' rest she returned to Saguane. A letter written by her in January 1900 shows what progress had been made there. As many as 1700 visitors attended the New Year gatherings and took part in the feasts and sports, and 300 people sat down at the Communion service, and 136 adults were baptized; and the marvellous thing was to see people

of various and formerly hostile tribes meeting together in a friendly fashion.

In April of the same year a young colleague arrived who was to superintend the Torres Straits Mission, and leave Chalmers free to extend his work on the Fly River. This was the Rev. Oliver F. Tomkins, who was ultimately to share Chalmers's tragic fate. He was a young man of great physical strength, fine appearance, high character, and fervent missionary enthusiasm; a man just after Chalmers's own heart. An event of less importance, but still an interesting one, was the arrival of a bell for the use of the church and school—all the more interesting because it was the bell whose sound had been familiar in Chalmers's boyish ears, for it came from Mr. Meikle's old church in Inveraray.

Saguane having by this time proved an unsuitable base for the Mission, Chalmers was preparing to transfer his headquarters to a better site at Daru, when Mrs. Chalmers

became seriously ill. This was in July 1900, and for fourteen weeks she grew steadily worse, and when the end seemed near she expressed a wish not to be left to die at Saguane and be buried in a swamp; and so on 24th October she was conveyed on board the *Niue* to Daru and there two days later she died. The few whites and the natives were kind and sympathetic. The death naturally was a sore grief and blow to Chalmers; he felt a great loneliness and 'a gnawing pain at the heart-strings.' He and she had cherished dreams of rest and leisure in a little cottage somewhere near London before 'crossing the flood'; but that and other dreams had to go unrealised. But his tireless spirit looked even 'across the flood' for work; he thought God would have to find work for him in Heaven, for even there he would still want to be a missionary.

Taking up his quarters at Daru he resumed his usual activities; and there the news reached him in February next year

of the death of a friend, Mr. Arthington of Leeds, who had left a quarter of a million to the funds of the London Missionary Society. He was struck by this, because it seemed to him the fulfilment of a dream which Mrs. Chalmers had on her deathbed, when she was greatly excited about a huge fortune which she believed was coming to the Society. For his use on the Fly River he had now got an excellent new whale-boat, built with a legacy specially left to the Mission for the purpose by Mrs. Chalmers.

In these last months of Chalmers's life he was greatly concerned about the slowness of the Gospel advance. He admitted that the temptation was strong to many to 'settle down' into an easy and comfortable life instead of boldly 'roughing it,' and enduring hardships to extend the Gospel to out-stations and new districts. And yet he contended that such a life as he was leading, with all its so-called 'hardships,' was far superior to the work of the

City Missionary at home ; more full of interest and happiness.

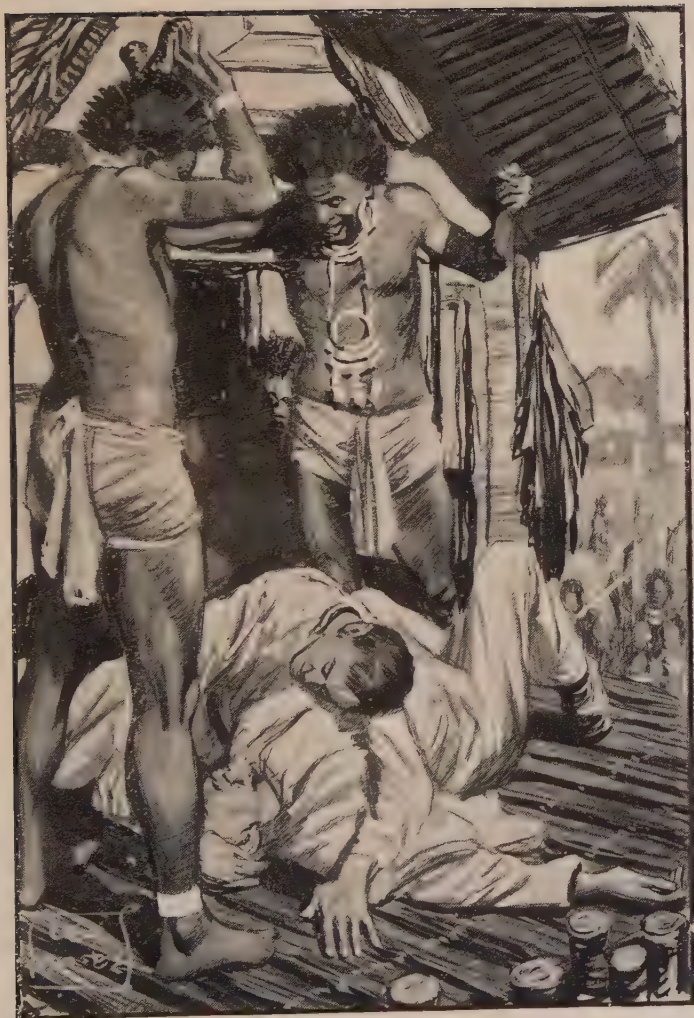
A visit of the *John Williams* to Daru in March 1901 cheered him and his companions, and enabled them to hold some Committee meetings. On the 4th of April he left in the *Niue* for the East, intending to go as far as Cape Blackwood, and to return in a fortnight. On the 7th the schooner anchored off the east end of the island of Goaribari at the mouth of the Omati River near the Aird Delta, and what happened then was only found out after Chalmers's death.

This is the tragic story. Crowds of natives came from the shore and remained on the schooner till sunset when Tamate persuaded them to return to the village, and promised he would visit them next day. At five next morning the natives returned and so crowded the deck of the ship that there was no room to move ; the canoes in which they came were full of arms. As it was impossible to get the natives to leave

the ship *Tamate* decided to go ashore, thinking that this would induce them to leave. Tomkins, fearing danger, would not allow him to go alone, and insisted on accompanying him in the whale-boat. About half of the natives followed and the rest remained on board. No further signs of the Mission party were seen, and the schooner, after waiting in vain for their return, left for Daru to report the matter. The natives who had remained on the schooner had looted it of everything they could carry away.

As soon as possible after this the Governor, on board the *Merrie England*, went with a large force to the spot, accompanied by another steamer, the *Parua*, on which were some officers and men from the Garrison at Thursday Island. The Rev. H. M. Dauncey of the London Missionary Society was also on board the *Parua*, and has given an account of what happened. The party landed at Dopima, and here captured a prisoner who, through an inter-

preter, explained that as soon as the arrival of the schooner was known a plot was got up to loot it and massacre the missionaries, and that no fewer than ten villages were implicated. As soon as Chalmers and Tomkins went on shore they and their followers were enticed to enter the large *dubu* at Dopima on pretence of getting something to eat, and Chalmers and his colleague were treacherously knocked from behind on the head with stone clubs and rendered senseless. This was the signal for a general massacre ; and Chalmers was then stabbed in the right side with a cassowary dagger, and his head cut off with a bamboo knife. The same treatment was given to Mr. Tomkins, and their bodies were immediately cut up and handed over to the women to cook, and subsequently eaten, the flesh being mixed with sago. In order to punish the criminals all the *dubus* of the ten villages were destroyed by fire. There were twenty *dubus* in all, and ten thousand human skulls were discovered



THE MARTYRDOM OF CHALMERS AND TOMKINS

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in them. In process of carrying this out the landing party was attacked by the natives, but it only required a few rounds of rifle firing to disperse the crowd. The other houses in the villages were spared as the intention was to let the punishment fall only upon the fighting men. The splendid whale-boat which Mrs. Chalmers's legacy had provided had been smashed up by the murderers, and its broken pieces divided among the various villages. It is supposed that the real reason of the massacre was that human sacrifices were wanted to celebrate the opening of a new *dubu*.

Thus did Chalmers gain his martyr's crown. It has been thought he had a premonition of such a sudden end, as his Autobiography was written up and his will placed uppermost in his desk. At any rate he was ready.

Every striking incident in a good man's life is capable of being viewed from two points of view according as we look at it

from the earthly and physical or the heavenly and spiritual side. Like the death on Calvary itself, the murder of Chalmers at Dopima may be regarded either as a brutal tragedy, the work of human fiends, or as the crowning glory of a life of splendid self-sacrifice. One cannot help thinking also that Chalmers himself would have been the first to disapprove of any punishment being inflicted on his murderers ; rather would he have prayed, ' Father, forgive them ! ' But the punishment, such as it was, was inflicted at least in the hope that it would put an end to such massacres in the future. The news of the great Missionary's tragic and unexpected death was speedily flashed across the civilised world, and wherever Chalmers and his work were known, was received with feelings of consternation and deep sorrow.

CHAPTER XI

WHAT OF THE FUTURE ?

‘ In this broad Earth of ours,
Amid the measureless grossness and the slag,
Enclosed and safe within its central heart
Nestles the seed Perfection.
Is it a dream ? Nay, but the lack of it a dream,
And failing it Life’s lore and wealth a dream,
And all the world a dream.’

THE blood of the martyrs is proverbially the seed of the Church. It is touching to read that immediately after the fate of Chalmers was known, Ruatoka, his native helper and trusted friend, expressed his ardent wish to spend the remainder of his life and strength in that village which had been the scene of the massacre, that he might teach and preach till the people there too became ‘ God’s children.’

When the news of the tragedy reached England, the usual great anniversary Church meetings were being held ; and in

a speech delivered at a missionary gathering in the Albert Hall, London, Dr. Lawes delivered an eloquent tribute to his late colleague and friend, and said that Chalmers's death must be avenged—not by fire and sword—but as Tamate himself would have it, by sending an army of Christian workers to win the people for Christ, and make it for ever impossible that such a deed should again be perpetrated in New Guinea. A memorial service was also held in the City Temple when Dr. Parker and Dr. Lawes delivered memorable speeches. In December 1902 Dr. Lawes reported that a unique service had been held at Vatorata, which was then the training centre for L. M. S. students in New Guinea. It was the occasion of the unveiling in the College Chapel of a beautiful stained-glass window in memory of James Chalmers and Mr. Tomkins, his colleague, a window of great artistic excellence containing full-length figures of Paul and Timothy.

Miss Beatrice Grimshaw, the famous

novelist and traveller, tells us that early in 1903 the Government of Papua came into the hands of Judge Robinson, Chief Justice, a member of a well-known Queensland family, and a man of humane and conscientious character, and of a very sensitive disposition. Among other matters that weighed upon his mind after he became responsible for the peace of the country was the bad effect which the murder of the white missionaries had had upon the Western tribes. The actual murderers had never been got, and the natives of the villages were still in possession of the heads and skeletons of the victims, and held them as trophies of war. He therefore decided to visit Goaribari Island, and make an effort to secure that punishment was duly inflicted and the remains of the dead missionaries recovered.

He sailed on board the *Merrie England* and took a force of armed constabulary with him. On his arrival a flotilla of

canoes surrounded the Government vessel, and many of the natives went on board. One of the native constabulary asserted that he recognised among these the actual murderers, but the moment an attempt was made to arrest them a *mêlée* ensued and arrows were flying ; the troops fired in return and several natives (including the supposed murderers) were killed. The villagers were eventually beaten off and retired, and the vessel sailed away. Exaggerated reports of what had happened spread throughout Australia, and the Government ordered an inquiry into the matter. Unfortunately Judge Robinson did not wait the result of the inquiry, but shot himself through the head with his revolver, and was found lying dead at the foot of the flagstaff in front of Government House. A sad event indeed, and one which would certainly have vexed the soul of Chalmers.

Miss Grimshaw, however, was privileged to take part in a similar but more success-

ful expedition at a later date when she accompanied the Governor in the *Merrie England* to Goaribari Island in 1908. She describes the low, swampy island with its ill-constructed brown huts standing above the mud of the foreshore, and the crowd of curious natives who paddled around in their canoes, wearing a strip of fibre or a petticoat of grass for clothing, but flaunting waving feathers and adorned with all kinds of shell ornaments, and having their faces streaked with scarlet or black paint. While sleeping in her berth with the port hole open she was suddenly aroused to see a dusky hand and arm swiftly abstracting her water-bottle! When the natives came on board they tried to steal everything that was not nailed or screwed down. The ship's boats were ordered out, and the party landed to visit the villages. On the spot where Chalmers and Tomkins had been killed a new *dubu* had been erected, 600 feet in length and supported on innumerable piles. One native pushed a bit

of cooked human flesh under Miss Grimshaw's nose, much to her disgust, and then laughing disappeared into the bush. The landing party had brought with them from the yacht materials for a meal, which they ate in the *dubu* ; a white cloth being spread on an impromptu table, tea made, and dishes of china and silver used. The crowd looked on amazed ; the proceedings seemed to them to be nothing less than sorcery of the worst kind ! Next day the Governor went ashore again, and after the exercise of some diplomacy succeeded in getting possession of the heads of the murdered missionaries, which were identified beyond doubt by certain known peculiarities, and were conveyed on the yacht to the mission station at Daru, and were there given reverent burial.

Miss Grimshaw was greatly struck by the natural beauty and the great resources of Papua. Nature is so prodigal that a modern planter's residence becomes a paradise of loveliness. Speaking of the people

she asserts that the Papuans are not a soft or gentle race like the natives of Tahiti, Samoa, or Hawaii, and are not likely to die out as some other native races have done before the advance of the white man. They are keen traders, and very conservative in regard to their own customs, though also very adaptable. They know something now of the value of money, though many of them still prefer tobacco to coin ; they like to get shirts and other European garments, but prefer to wear them only on holiday occasions. As a rule they are now on friendly terms with the white man, though native still murders native, and they still believe in sorcery and practise many debasing customs. Some of the *dubus* contain not only collections of skulls both of men and beasts, but also wooden shields carved into faces more horrible than the gargoyles of Notre Dame. Law and order are well enforced by resident magistrates and a native constabulary ; and the planters and traders also have, as

a rule, a civilising influence. After a year's engagement with a white employer the native returns to his village with new ideas of the value of cleanliness, honesty, and industry; with more self-respect and a higher ideal of life. One great drawback is the vast variety of different languages spoken on the island. This is a great hindrance to the work of the missionary as well as that of the trader, but is got over to a certain extent by the adoption of 'pidgin' English. A representative of the L. M. S. states that in British New Guinea there are twenty-seven distinctly different languages spoken by the natives, to say nothing of numerous dialects. Within the L. M. S. Mission Area there are thirteen districts, and in these the missionaries have to deal with eleven languages.

The breaking out of the Great European War had a great and immediate effect on our possessions in New Guinea. The northern half of the eastern portion of the island which belonged to Germany and

was called Kaiser Wilhelm's Land, was taken possession of in September 1914 by the Australian Navy with the assistance of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force, and thus the territory in New Guinea for which Britain is responsible is now in size and population twice what it was in Chalmers's day. What was German territory is now 'mandated' to Australia, and is governed by an Edinburgh man, Brigadier Wisdom, and some hundreds of returned soldiers have been settled on estates formerly belonging to our enemies.

The London Missionary Society has only been at work for half a century in Papua but has accomplished much in that time. Books have been translated into native languages, schools and churches have been built, natives have been educated and also encouraged in industrial pursuits, and there is an active and devoted native ministry. In recent reports of work on the Fly River we read that prices have gone up 300 per cent. since the War, and that

attendance at church has suffered through the inability of the people to buy Sunday clothes. We read also of the devotion of native evangelists, one of whom relinquished a situation of about £100 a year — a fortune in New Guinea — to take a tenth part of that as salary as a preacher.

The fourth *John Williams*, a steel-built steamer, is doing service to-day in New Guinea and voyages 30,000 miles a year. At Toaripi, Chalmers's old station, a visitor speaks of having met a native deacon who had so little clothing that a pocket handkerchief would have supplied all he wore, but nevertheless he was as good and faithful a deacon as many in the churches at home. At other stations boys and girls play cricket and work knitting-machines. And so civilisation and Christianity advance together.

Whatever may be the future of the island the name of James Chalmers is imperishably connected with the history of New

Guinea ; and by his death he has purchased its soil for Christ and Christianity.

Chalmers was essentially a Pioneer Missionary, and both from temperament and physique admirably fitted for the work. He never seemed to feel fatigue or weariness, and he could go without food for periods of unusual length. He has earned fame as an explorer and discoverer ; in many places his was the first white face ever seen by the inhabitants, and many natives were so proud of the fact that they named their children after him. There is no doubt that his was a keen, active, restless temperament : he used to say he had gipsy blood in his veins ; a life of travel, incident, and excitement suited him much better than the patient, steady, humdrum routine of the student or preacher. He was naturally impulsive, but learned to control his hasty temper, and, as a rule, mingled tact, commonsense, and prudence with his zeal and enthusiasm. He was not what would be called a scholar, yet he

succeeded in doing service both as author and translator ; and as a speaker he had quite an unusual success and a marvellously impressive power. Frank, generous, genial, and unselfish, he easily made friends wherever he went ; he was a natural storyteller, with a vivid imagination and a keen sense of humour. He was a born optimist, and always hoped for the best ; and he had a hatred of all cant and sham. Modest and dauntlessly courageous, he spent unweariedly an adventurous life in wholehearted consecration to the cause of his Master.

Are there still to be found in our country and in this enlightened age, people who think such a life as that of Chalmers was wasted, who disbelieve in missions, and scoff at the idea of elevating native races on the ground that they are little better than animals ? If so, do they read history ? Have they considered what was the condition of our own country before the Christian era ? Our own remote an-

cestors were as degraded as the cannibals of the Pacific Islands until the brave missionaries of the Cross faced death to preach to them the Gospel of Love. Do we not owe all that we have and are as citizens of a splendid Empire to Christianity ? And have we no vision of what these dusky races of the South Seas may yet become through the regenerating and uplifting power of the Gospel ? Have we any right to put a limit to its power, or to restrict its message ? Do we not profess to believe that Christ is King and Lord of the whole world ? And when we look around do we not see great territories where as yet He Who is rightful King does not reign ? And is it not the duty of every one who believes the Christian faith to do what he can to carry the golden message of the Cross to all creatures, and to the very ends of the Earth ?

Chalmers may not have been either an ideal man or an ideal missionary, but he cherished the loftiest ideal a man can

conceive, he lived a noble and heroic life and he crowned it by a martyr's death. His methods were not the stereotyped ones and may not have commended themselves always to his superiors, or to those who sit in the arm-chairs of office and direct others. He not only preached but lived the Gospel, moving humbly yet courageously among the people even as the Man of Nazareth did, showing himself a brother to the most degraded, and striving with infinite patience and kindness to make them realise their immortal destiny. In doing this he laboured and endured without stint and without flinching, and surely no one can doubt that, when he gave in his account, he received the 'Well done, faithful servant' from his Master, and that a life such as his was pleasing in the sight of Him 'Who toiled, a Carpenter, yet saved the World.'

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ix, 176 p. front. (port.) plates. 19^{cm}. (Master missionary series.)

I. Chalmers, James, 1841-1901. II. Title. III. Series: Master missionary series.

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